

This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

Digitized by Google

BODLEIAN LIBRARY

The gift of

Miss Emma F. I. Dunston

1232/2

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE ADVENTURES OF GIL BLAS OF SANTILLANE.

A NEW TRANSLATION,

By the Authour of RODERICK RANDOM.

Adorned with Twelve new CUTS, neatly engraved.

In FOUR VOLUMES.

THE SIXTH EDITION.

VOLUME II.

LONDON:

Printed for T. LONGMAN; B. LAW and SON; G. G. J. and J. ROBINSON, J. JOHNSON, T. CADEL, W. RICHARDSON, W. OTRIDGE, J. MURRAY, W. GOLDSMITH, J. SEWELL, W. LANE, T. VERNOR, J. SCATCHARD and J. WHITAKER, W. LOWNDES, S. HAYES, G. and T. WILKIE, R. FAULDER, W. FENNING, and R. BALDWIN.

M DCC XCII.

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

THE

CONTENTS

OF

VOLUME II.

BOOK IV.

CHAP. I. Gil Blas being diſguſted at the irregularities of the actreſſes, quits the ſervice of Arſenia, and gets into a more creditable family 1

CHAP. II. The reception which Gil Blas met with from Aurora, and the converſation that paſſed between them 9

CHAP. III. The great change that happened in the family of Don Vincent, and the ſtrange reſolution with which love inſpired the fair Aurora 14

CHAP. IV. The baleful marriage. A Novel 22

CHAP. V. The behaviour of Aurora de Guzman, at Salamanca 61

CHAP. VI. The ſtratagems practiſed by Aurora, to captivate Don Lewis de Pacheco 74

CHAP. VII. Gil Blas quits his place, and goes into the ſervice of Don Gonzales de Pacheco

CHAP. VIII. The character of the marchione

Digitized by Google

chioneſs of Chaves, and of thoſe people who uſually viſited her. 100
CHAP. IX. The incident, in conſequence of which Gil Blas quitted the marchioneſs de Chaves; and the courſe he followed afterwards 106
CHAP. X. The ſtory of Don Alphonſo and the fair Seraphina 113
CHAP. XI. The old hermit diſcovers himſelf, and Gil Blas perceives that he is among his acquaintance 133

BOOK V.

CHAP. I. The hiſtory of Don Raphael 140
CHAP. II. The council which Don Raphael held with his hearers, and the adventure which happened to them when they deſigned to quit the wood 233

BOOK VI.

CHAP. I. The conduct of Gil Blas and his companions, after they quitted the count de Polan. The important project which Ambroſe formed, and the manner in which it was executed 240
CHAP. II. The reſolution which Don Alphonſo and Gil Blas formed after this adventure 254
CHAP. III. After what diſagreeable incident Don Alphonſo found his wiſhes fulfilled; and by what adventure Gil Blas, of a ſudden, ſaw himſelf in a happy ſituation 259

THE

Digitized by Google

THE ADVENTURES OF GIL BLAS OF SANTILLANE.

BOOK IV.

CHAP I.

Gil Blas, being diſguſted at the irregularities of the actreſſes, quits the ſervice of Arſenia, and gets into a more creditable family.

A REMNANT of honour and religion, which I did not fail to preſerve amidſt ſuch corruption of morals, made me reſolve not only to leave Arſenia, but alſo to break off all correſpondence with Laura, whom, however, I could not help loving, though I was ſenſible of her flagrant infidelity. Happy is he who can thus profit by thoſe moments

Digitized by Google

of reflection that interrupt the pleaſures which ingroſs his attention! Early one morning, I bundled up my clothes, and without clearing with Arſenia, who was, indeed, little or nothing in my debt, or taking leave of my dear Laura, I quitted the houſe where I had breathed nothing but the air of debauchery; and I had no ſooner performed ſuch a good action, than heaven rewarded me for it, by throwing me in the way of the ſteward of Don Matthias my late maſter. Having ſaluted him, he knew me, and ſtopped to enquire if I was in any ſervice: to which I anſwered, that I had been about a minute or two out of place: for that, after having lived about a month with Arſenia, whoſe behaviour I did not like, I had left her of my own accord, in order to preſerve my innocence. The ſteward, as if he had been ſcrupulouſly religious, approved of my delicacy, and told me, that ſince I was a young man of ſuch honour, he would make it his buſineſs to ſettle me in an advantageous place. He performed his promiſe, and that very day introduced me into the ſervice of Don Vincent de Guzman, whoſe manager was one of his acquaintance.

I could not have got into a better family, and therefore had no cauſe to be diſpleaſed with my ſituation in the ſequel. Don Vincent was a very rich old nobleman, who had lived many years without law-ſuit or wife; the phyſicians having deprived him of his ſpouſe, by endeavouring to free her of a cough, which ſhe

Digitized by Google

ſhe might have preſerved much longer had ſhe abſtained from their preſcriptions. Inſtead of marrying again, he had applied himſelf wholly to the education of Aurora, his only daughter, who was then going in her ſix and twentieth year, and juſtly paſſed for an accompliſhed young lady, for with an uncommon ſhare of beauty, ſhe had an excellent genius perfectly well cultivated. Her father, though he was no conjurer, poſſeſſed the happy talent of managing his affairs to the beſt advantage; but had one fault, which, however, is pardonable in old men. He delighted in talking, and above all things, of war and bloodſhed. If any body was ſo unfortunate as to touch that ſtring in his preſence, he inſtantly ſet the trumpet to his mouth; and the hearers were very happy if they got off for the relation of two ſieges and three battles. As he had ſpent two thirds of his life in the army, his memory was an inexhauſtible ſource of different actions, which were not always liſtened to with the ſame applauſe which he felt in recounting them. Beſides, he ſtammered in his ſpeech, and was very prolix, which rendered his manner of relating very diſagreeable. Otherwiſe I never knew a nobleman of a better character. He had a great deal of equanimity, and was neither paſſionate nor whimſical: a circumſtance, which I admired very much in a man of quality. Though he was a good œconomiſt, he kept an honour-

Digitized by Google

able houſe, his domeſtics conſiſting of ſeveral footmen, and three women who waited on Aurora. I ſoon perceived that the ſteward of Don Matthias had procured a good poſt for me, and bent all my endeavours to maintain myſelf in it: for this purpoſe I began by reconnoitering the ground; that is, ſtudying the different humours of every body in the family; then, regulating my conduct by the obſervations I made, it was not long before I acquired the good will of my maſter, and all his ſervants.

When I had been about a month in Don Vincent's family, I thought I perceived that his daughter diſtinguiſhed me from all the reſt of the valets in the houſe. Always, when her eyes were fixed upon me, I remarked a ſort of complaiſance in her countenance, which I could not obſerve when ſhe looked at my fellows. Had I not lived among beaus and players, it would never have come into my head to imagine that Aurora could think of me; but I was a good deal ſpoiled among theſe gentlemen, who are ſeldom extremely delicate in their ſentiments of the moſt virtuous ladies. "If (ſaid I to myſelf) we may believe thoſe ſtage players, they are ſometimes benefitted by the whims to which women of quality are ſubject. And how do I know that my miſtreſs is free from ſuch caprice? No! (added I) I cannot believe it. She is not one of thoſe Meſſalinas, who, belying the pride

Digitized by Google

pride of their birth, humble their affections ſo unworthily, even to the duſt, and diſhonour themſelves without bluſhing. But rather, one of thoſe virtuous, though tender, young ladies, who, ſatisfied with the bounds preſcribed by honour to their inclinations, make no ſcruple of inſpiring as well as of entertaining a delicate paſſion, which yields amuſement without danger."

Theſe were my ſentiments of my miſtreſs; tho' I did not know preciſely how to interpret her behaviour. In the mean time, as often as ſhe ſaw me, ſhe did not fail to ſmile and expreſs joy in her countenance; ſo that, without paſſing for a fool, any man might have been enſnared by ſuch fair appearances: I therefore could reſiſt them no longer; but concluded, that Aurora was ſtrongly captivated with my merit; and looked upon myſelf as one of thoſe happy domeſtics whoſe ſervitude is ſweetened by love That I might appear in ſome meaſure leſs unworthy of the favour which my good fortune had procured for me, I began to take more care of my perſon than I had ever done before: I ſpent all the money I had in linen, eſſences, and pomatums: the firſt thing I did of a morning was to dreſs and perfume myſelf, that I might not appear in diſhabille before my miſtreſs; and with this attention to my exteriors, and other airs I aſſumed, in order to pleaſe, I flattered myſelf that my happineſs was not far off.

Digitized by Google

Among Aurora's women there was one called Ortiz, an old gentlewoman who had lived more than twenty years in the family, and nurſed Don Vincent's daughter, whom ſhe ſtill ſerved in quality of a duenna, though ſhe no longer performed the diſagreeable part of that function; but, on the contrary, inſtead of diſcovering, as formerly, the actions of Aurora, her ſole buſineſs now was to conceal them. One evening, Dame Ortiz, having found an opportunity of ſpeaking to me without being overheard, told me ſoftly, that if I was wiſe and diſcreet, I would be in the garden at midnight, where I ſhould be informed of things which I ſhould not be ſorry to hear. I anſwered, ſqueezing the duenna's hand, that I would not fail to be there; and we parted immediately, for fear of being ſurpriſed. Heavens! how did the time hang on my hands, from that inſtant to ſupper (which in our family was always over in good time) and from thence to my maſter's going to bed! Every thing ſeemed to drag on with extraordinary ſlowneſs, and to crown my chagrin, when Don Vincent retired to his bed-chamber, inſtead of going to reſt, he began to fight over again all his campaigns in Portugal, with which he had ſo often ſtunned me before. But one thing which he had never done hitherto, and reſerved for this evening was to tell me the names of all the officers who had diſtinguiſhed themſelves in his time; and even o recount their exploits. What did I ſuffer in

Digitized by Google

in hearing him to an end! He left off ſpeaking, however, at laſt, and got into bed. Upon which I went into the little cloſet where I ſlept, from thence there was a paſſage, by a pair of back ſtairs, into the garden, and anointed my whole body with eſſence: I then put on a clean ſhirt ſtrongly perfumed, and having neglected nothing which I thought might flatter the paſſion of my miſtreſs, went directly to the place of aſſignation.

Not finding Ortiz there, I concluded that, tired with waiting for me, ſhe had returned to her apartment, and that the happy minute was paſt. I blamed Don Vincent for it, and as I was curſing his campaigns, heard it ſtrike ten. This made me believe that the clock went wrong, for I was perſuaded that it was at leaſt an hour paſt midnight; but I was ſo happily miſtaken, that a good quarter of an hour after this, I heard another clock ſtrike ten again. "Very well (ſaid I to myſelf) I have but two whole hours to dance attendance, and they ſhall have no cauſe to complain of my punctuality. What muſt we do till twelve? Let us take a turn in the garden, and conſider the part I am to play, which is a pretty new one to me, who am but a novice in the whims of women of quality. I know well enough how to behave with abigails and actreſſes; theſe you accoſt with a familiar air, and come to the point without ceremony; but we muſt go another way to work with ladies of faſhion: the gallant, I imagine, muſt be polite, com-

Digitized by Google

plaiſant, tender, and reſpectful, though not timorous: inſtead of endeavouring to haſten his own happineſs, by the violence of his tranſports, he ought to lie in wait for the moment of frailty."

Theſe were my reflections, and this the conduct I propoſed to obſerve with Aurora; repreſenting to myſelf, that in a little time, I ſhould have the pleaſure of ſeeing myſelf at her feet, and of ſaying a thouſand paſſionate things to that amiable object. I even recollected all the paſſages of our theatrical pieces, which might be of ſervice to me, and do me honour during our interview; and by a ſeaſonable application of theſe, I hoped (after the example of ſome players whom I knew) to paſs for a wit, though I could only boaſt of a memory. Abſorbed in theſe reflections, which amuſed my impatience more agreeably than the military ſtories of my maſter, I heard the clock ſtrike eleven; upon which I plunged again into my reverie, ſometimes walking, and ſometimes ſitting in an harbour at the farther end of the garden. The long expected hour of twelve at laſt ſtruck, and in a few minutes, Ortiz, as punctual, though leſs impatient than I, appeared. "Signor Gil Blas (ſaid ſhe, accoſting me) how long have you been here?" I replied two hours. "In good ſooth (ſaid ſhe, laughing) you are very exact, it is a pleaſure to make an aſſignation with you. True, indeed (continued ſhe, with a ſerious air) you cannot pay too dear for the happy tidings I have

Digitized by Google

have to tell you. My miſtreſs wants to have ſome private converſation with you. I will ſay no more. The reſt is a ſecret you muſt learn from her own mouth. Follow me, and I will conduct you into her apartment." So ſaying, the duenna took me by the hand, and led me, in a myſterious manner, through a little door, of which ſhe had the key, into the chamber of her miſtreſs.

CHAP. II.

The reception that Gil Blas met with from Aurora, and the converſation that paſſed between them.

I Saluted Aurora, whom I found in diſhabille, in the moſt reſpectful manner, and with the beſt grace I could put on; and ſhe received me with a ſmiling air, forced me to ſit down by her, and bad her ambaſſadreſs retire into another room. After this prelude, with which I was not ill pleaſed, ſhe addreſſed herſelf to me in theſe words: "Gil Blas, you muſt have perceived that I look upon you in a favourable light, and diſtinguiſh you from the reſt of my father's ſervants; and even, though you may not have obſerved by my looks that I have a regard for you, the ſtep I have taken this night, will leave you no room to doubt it."

I gave her no time to proceed, but believing that I ought, as a polite gentleman, to ſpare her modeſty the pain of a more formal explanation, I ſtarted up in a tranſport, and

Digitized by Google

throwing myſelf at her feet, like a ſtage hero, who falls on his knees before his princeſs, cried in a theatrical tone, "Ah, madam! can it be poſſible that Gil Blas, hitherto the foot-ball of fortune, and outcaſt of nature, is ſo happy as to have inſpired you with ſentiments—" "Don't ſpeak ſo loud (ſaid my miſtreſs, laughing) you will awaken my women, who are aſleep in the next room. Get up, take your ſeat again, and hear me to an end, without interrupting me. Yes, Gil Blas (continued ſhe, reſuming her gravity) I am your well-wiſher; and as a proof of my eſteem, will impart to you a ſecret, on which the repoſe of my life depends: I am in love with a young gentleman of beauty, fortune, and illuſtrious birth: his name is Don Lewis Pacheco; and although I have ſeen him ſeveral times in the Prado, and at public ſhows, I have never ſpoke to him, am even ignorant of his character, and dont know but he may be a perſon of bad morals. This is what I want to be informed of; and having occaſion for a man to enquire carefully about his reputation, and bring me a faithful account of it, I make choice of you, and believe I run no riſk, by entruſting you with this commiſſion, in which I hope you will acquit yourſelf with ſo much diſcretion and addreſs, that I ſhall never repent of having made you my confidant."

Here my miſtreſs left off ſpeaking, in order to know what anſwer I would make; and I, though at firſt diſconcerted at being ſo diſagreeably

Digitized by Google

agreebly undeceived, quickly recollected myſelf, and ſurmounting the ſhame, which is always the concomitant of unſucceſsful raſhneſs, expreſſed ſo much zeal for the lady's intereſts, and devoted myſelf with ſo much ardour to her ſervice, that, though ſhe might ſtill continue to think that I had fooliſhly flattered myſelf with having made an impreſſion on her heart, ſhe ſaw very well that I knew how to make amends for my folly. I aſked but two days to bring her an account of Don Lewis; after which Dame Ortiz, being called in by her miſtreſs, conducted me back into the garden, and left me there, after having ſaid, "Good night, Gil Blas, I know your punctuality ſo well, that I need not reccommend it to you to be early at the next aſſignation."

I returned to my chamber, not without ſome vexation to find my expectations baulked: nevertheleſs, I was wiſe enough to reflect, that it became me better to be the confidant than the lover of my miſtreſs. I conſidered too, that this might turn out to my advantage, as the meſſengers of love are, uſually, well paid for their trouble; and I went to bed, in a full reſolution to perform what Aurora deſired. With this view, I went abroad next day, and found no difficulty in learning the place of abode of ſuch a noted cavalier as Don Lewis. I enquired into his character in the neighbourhood; but thoſe to whom I applied could not fully ſatisfy my curioſity. This made me repeat my enquiries the following

Digitized by Google

day, when I was more ſucceſsful. Meeting by accident, in the ſtreet, a young man of my acquaintance, we ſtopped to chat a little, and, that very inſtant a friend of his happening to paſs, made up to us, and told his comrade, that he had been juſt turned away by Don Pacheco, the father of Don Lewis, on ſuſpicion of having drank a caſk of wine belonging to his maſter. I did not loſe ſuch a fair opportunity of being informed of every thing I wanted to know, and ſucceeded ſo well by the queſtions I aſked, that I went home very well ſatisfied that I was able to keep my word with my miſtreſs. I was to ſee her again the next night, at the ſame hour and in the ſame manner as at firſt; but I did not ſuffer ſo much diſquiet that night, and far from bearing the converſation of my old maſter with impatience, I introduced the ſubjects of his campaigns, waited for twelve with the utmoſt tranquillity, and it was not until I had heard the hour repeated by ſeveral clocks, that I went down into the garden, void of eſſence, and perfumes, reſolved, for the future to retrench that extravagance.

I found the moſt truſty duenna at the rendezvous, and ſhe upbraided me in a ſatirical manner for having abated in my diligence. I made no anſwer, but let her conduct me into the apartment of Aurora, who, as ſoon as I appeared, aſked if I had got good intelligence of Don Lewis?—"Yes, Madam (ſaid I) and you ſhall hear it in two words. In the firſt

Digitized by Google

firſt place I muſt tell you, that he will ſet out very ſoon, on his return to Salamanca, in order to finiſh his ſtudies. He is a young cavalier of honour and probity, and, being a gentleman and Caſtilian, his courage is not to be doubted; he has, beſides, a great deal of wit, and his behaviour is very agreeable: but that which, perhaps, you will leaſt like in him, is a diſpoſition, too much a-kin to that of moſt of our young noblemen, extremely rakiſh. You muſt know that, young as he is, he has already had two actreſſes in keeping."—"Is it poſſible! (cried Aurora) heavens! what morals! But are you certain, Gil Blas, that he leads ſuch a licentious life?"—"Oh! I don't at all doubt it, madam (I replied;) I was informed by a valet, who was turned out of his ſervice this morning: and ſervants are commonly very ſincere, when they talk of their maſter's faults: beſides, he keeps company with Don Alexo Segiar, Don Antonio Centelles, and Don Fernand de Gamboa; and that alone, is a ſufficient demonſtration of his libertiniſm."—"Enough, Gil Blas (ſaid my miſtreſs, ſighing;) on the credit of your report, I will combat my unworthy paſſion, which, though it has already taken deep root in my heart, I don't deſpair to overcome. Go (added ſhe, giving me a little purſe well repleniſhed) there is ſomething for your trouble; beware of diſcloſing my ſecret, and remember that I depend upon your ſilence."

I aſſured

Digitized by Google

I assured my mistress, that she might make herself perfectly easy on that score, for I was the Harpocrates * of trusty valets. After this assurance, I withdrew, very impatient to know the contents of the purse, in which I found twenty pistoles. This made me believe that Aurora would have certainly given me more, had I brought her agreeable tidings, since she paid me so handsomely for such a mortifying piece of news: and I repented that I had not imitated the lawyers, who sometimes put a gloss upon the truth, in the practice of their profession: I was sorry for having nipped in the bud an intrigue, the consequence of which might have been very advantageous to me; however, I had the consolation to see myself indemnified for my unseasonable expence in essences and perfumes.

CHAP. III.

The great change that happened in the family of Don Vincent, and the strange resolution with which love inspired the fair Aurora.

SOON after this adventure, Signor Don Vincent happened to fall sick; and though he had not been in such an advanced age, the symptoms of his disease were so violent, that we had reason to fear a fatal issue. When he was first seized, two of the most famous physicians of Madrid were sent for. One of them was

* Harpocrates, among the ancients, was worshipped as the God of Silence.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Vol. 2.d B.4. Chap. 3.



Ansell. delin. Skelton Sculp.

Digitized by Google

was called Doctor Andros, and the other Doctor Oquetos, who having examined the patient with great attention, were of opinion, that the humours of his body were in a ſtate of fermentation: but in nothing elſe could they agree.—"We muſt make haſte (ſaid Andros) and purge off the humours, though they be crude, while they continue in this violent agitation of flux and reflux, leſt they ſettle upon ſome noble part."—Oquetos, on the contrary, maintained, that they ought to wait for the concoction of the humours, before they ſhould employ a cathartic.—"But your method (reſumed the firſt) is directly oppoſite to that of the prince of medicine: Hippocrates orders cathartics in the very firſt days of the moſt ardent fever, and ſays, in expreſs terms, that we muſt be ready to purge, when the humours are in the orgaſm; that is to ſay, in a ſtate of fermentation."—"Oh! there you are miſtaken (replied Oquetos) Hippocrates, by the word orgaſm, does not underſtand the fermentation, but the concoction of the humours."

Upon this, the doctors grew paſſionate: one repeated the Greek text, and quoted all thoſe authors who had explained it in his way; the other, relying on a Latin tranſlation, pronounced it in a tone ſtill more vociferous. Which of them was in the right? Don Vincent was not the man to decide that queſtion; but, ſeeing himſelf obliged to chooſe, beſtowed his confidence on him who had diſpatched

Digitized by Google

patched the greateſt number of patients; I mean the eldeſt of the two. Andros, therefore, who was the younger, withdrew, not without darting ſome ſtrokes of raillery at his ſenior, on his interpretation of the word orgaſm. Oquetos, who remained triumphant, being a man of Doctor Sangrado's principle, began, by ordering his patient to be copiouſly blooded, deferring his cathartic until the humours ſhould be concocted; but death, who without doubt, was afraid the purgation ſo ſagely delayed would deprive him of his prey, prevented the concoction, and carried my maſter off. Such was the end of Signor Don Vincent, who loſt his life, becauſe his phyſician did not underſtand Greek!

Aurora having celebrated her father's funeral, in a manner ſuitable to his birth, took poſſeſſion of his eſtate, and, being now miſtreſs of herſelf, diſmiſſed ſome of the domeſtics, with rewards proportioned to their ſeveral ſervices, and, in a little time, retired to a caſtle, which ſhe had on the banks of the Tagus, between Sacedon and Buendia. I was not only one of thoſe whom ſhe had retained, and carried into the country with her, but alſo had the good fortune to become a neceſſary perſon. Notwithſtanding the faithful report I had made to her of Don Lewis, ſhe was ſtill in love with that cavalier; or rather, finding herſelf unable to conquer her paſſion, ſhe had abandoned herſelf entirely to it; and being no longer under a neceſſity of taking precautions

to

Digitized by Google

to ſpeak with me in private, "Gil Blas (ſaid ſhe ſighing) I cannot forget Don Lewis; in ſpite of all my efforts to baniſh him from my thoughts, he is ſtill preſent in my imagination; not ſuch as thou haſt painted him, plunged in all ſorts of debauchery; but ſuch as I would have him to be, tender, amorous, and conſtant." So ſaying, ſhe began to melt, and could not help ſhedding ſome tears; which affected me ſo much, that I could ſcarce refrain from weeping alſo; and I could not make my court to her more effectually, than by ſympathizing with her ſorrow.—"I ſee thou haſt a very tender diſpoſition, my friend (added ſhe after having dried her fair eyes) and I am ſo well ſatisfied with thy zeal, that thou mayeſt depend upon being well recompenſed. Dear Gil Blas, I have more occaſion now than ever for thy aſſiſtance. I will diſcloſe to thee a deſign, which at preſent engroſſes me, and which thou wilt (no doubt) pronounce very capricious. Know, that I intend to ſet out immediately for Salamanca, where I will diſguiſe myſelf like a cavalier, and, under the name of Don Felix, get acquainted with Pacheco, whoſe confidence and friendſhip I will endeavour to acquire: I will often ſpeak to him of Aurora de Guzman, and call myſelf her couſin; by which mean ſ, he will, perhaps, expreſs a deſire to ſee her; and then my expectation will be anſwered. We will have two different lodgings at Salamanca, in one of which I will paſs for Don Felix,

Digitized by Google

Felix, in the other for Aurora, and preſenting myſelf to the eyes of Don Lewis, ſometimes metamorphoſed into a man, and ſometimes in my own dreſs, I flatter myſelf, that I ſhall, by degrees, accompliſh my purpoſe. I grant (added ſhe) that this is an extravagant ſcheme; but I am hurried away by my paſſion, and the innocence of my intention makes me inſenſible of the riſk I muſt run."

I was very much of Aurora's opinion, with regard to the nature of her deſign: nevertheleſs, how imprudent ſoever I judged it, I took care not to act the padagogue; but, on the contrary began to gild the pill, and undertook to prove, that this mad project was no more than an agreeable frolic, that could have no bad conſequence. My miſtreſs was pleaſed with this conſtruction; for lovers are charmed with flattery, even in their moſt extravagant fancies. We now, therefore, looked upon this raſh enterprize in no other light than that of a comedy, the ſkilful repreſentation of which it was our buſineſs to concert. Having choſen our actors from the ſervants of the family; the parts were diſtributed, without the leaſt quarrel or diſturbance; becauſe we were not players by profeſſion. It was reſolved that Dame Ortiz ſhould act the part of Aurora's aunt, under the name of Donna Ximena de Guzman, attended by a valet and waiting-woman; and that Aurora, dreſſed like a cavalier, ſhould entertain me as valet de chambre, together with one of her own

Digitized by Google

own maids in the diſguiſe of a page, to be always about her perſon. The characters being thus regulated, we returned to Madrid, where we underſtood Don Lewis ſtill was, but that it would not be long before he would ſet out for Salamanca; upon which we ordered the neceſſary dreſſes to be made with all diligence; and when they were finiſhed, my miſtreſs cauſed them to be conveniently packed up, until we ſhould find a proper time and place for putting them on. Then leaving the care of her houſe to the ſteward, ſhe ſet out in a coach drawn by four mules, and took the road to the kingdom of Leon, with all thoſe of her ſervants who had parts to act in her performance.

We had already croſſed Old Caſtile, when the axle-tree of the coach gave way, between Avila and Villaflor, about three or four hundred paces from a caſtle, which we perceived at the foot of a mountain. As night approached, we were not a little embarraſſed, when a peaſant, paſſing by accident, rid us of our anxiety, by telling us that the caſtle which we ſaw belonged to Donna Elvira, widow of Don Pedro de Pinares, a lady whoſe character he extolled ſo much, that my miſtreſs ſent me to the caſtle, to beg a lodging for one night. Elvira did not belie the countryman's report, but received me with great affability, and favoured Aurora's compliment with ſuch an anſwer as ſhe deſired. We repaired immediately to the caſtle, whither our coach

Digitized by Google

coach was dragged ſlowly by the mules, and at the gate met Don Pedro's widow, who came out to receive my miſtreſs. I will paſs over in ſilence the civil things which were ſaid on both ſides, on this occaſion, and only obſerve, that Elvira was a lady pretty much advanced in years; but very polite, and underſtood how to perform the duties of hoſpitality as well as any woman in the world. She conducted Aurora into a ſumptuous apartment, where, leaving her to repoſe a few moments, ſhe came and employed her attention on the moſt minute things that concerned us. Afterwards, when ſupper was ready, ſhe ordered the cloth to be laid in Aurora's chamber, where they ſat down together at table. Don Pedro's widow was not one of thoſe people who cloud the honour of their entertainments with a penſive and diſcontented air: ſhe was of a gay diſpoſition, and ſupported the converſation in an agreeable manner; expreſſing herſelf with great dignity and elegance. I admired her underſtanding, and the delicate turn of her thoughts, which ſeemed to charm Aurora as well as me. They conceived a friendſhip for one another, and promiſed to maintain a correſpondence by letters. Our coach could not be refitted till the following day, and as we ſhould run ſome riſk by ſetting out late, it was determined that we ſhould ſtay at the Caſtle another night. We, in our turn, were ſerved with a profuſion of victuals, and

Digitized by Google

and our beds were no leſs comfortable than our meal.

Next day, my miſtreſs found new charms in the converſation of Elvira, with whom ſhe dined in a large hall, adorned with ſeveral pictures, one of which was remarkable for the beauty and wonderful expreſſion of the figures, though it repreſented a very tragical ſcene to the view. A dead cavalier appeared lying on his back, and drowned in his own blood, but ſeemed ſtill to retain a menacing air even in death. Near him lay a young lady in another attitude, ſtretched alſo upon the ground; a ſword was ſeen plunged in her boſom, and ſhe breathed her laſt ſighs, fixing her dying eyes upon a young man, who ſeemed mortally grieved at the loſs of her. The painter had likewiſe drawn another figure, which did not eſcape my attention; this was an old man of a good mein, who, ſtrongly affected with the objects that ſtruck his view, diſcovered as much ſenſibility as the youth. One would have thought that each of them felt the ſame pangs at ſight of theſe doleful images, but that each received the impreſſion in a different manner. The old man ſeemed overwhelmed with the profound ſorrow in which he was plunged: but there was fury mixed with the affliction of the youth. The painter had expreſſed the whole with ſuch ſtrength, that we could ſcarce withdraw our eyes from the performance. My miſtreſs having aſked what ſtory the picture repreſented;

" Madam

Digitized by Google

"Madam (ſaid Elvira) it is a faithful repreſentation of the misfortunes of my family." This anſwer excited the curioſity of Aurora, who expreſſed ſuch an eager inclination to know more, that Don Pedro's widow could not diſpenſe with promiſing her the ſatisfaction ſhe deſired. This promiſe which was made before Ortiz, her two companions, and me, detained us all four in the hall after dinner. My miſtreſs would have ſent us away, but Elvira, perceiving that we longed fervently to hear the explanation of the picture, had the goodneſs to bid us ſtay, ſaying that the ſtory which ſhe was going to relate, was none of thoſe that required ſecrecy: and immediately began in theſe words:

*CHAP. IV.

The baleful marriage. A Novel.

ROGER, king of Sicily, had a brother and a ſiſter: the firſt, called Mainfroy, revolted againſt him, and lighted up a dangerous and bloody war in the kingdom; but had the misfortune to loſe two battles, and fall into the hands of the king, who contented himſelf with puniſhing his rebellion, by depriving him of his liberty. This clemency ſerved only to make Roger paſs for a barbarian, in the opinion of one part of his ſubjects, who ſaid he had only ſaved his brother's life, in order to exerciſe

* This novel is a true ſtory, on which the late Mr. Thomſon has founded his tragedy of Tancred and Sagiſmunda.

Digitized by Google

exercise upon him a slow and inhuman revenge. But all the rest, with more foundation, imputed the harsh treatment that Mainfroy suffered in prison, to his sister Matilda alone: for she had, in effect, always hated the prince, and did not cease persecuting him as long as he lived, but she died soon after him, and her death was looked upon as a just punishment of her unnatural disposition.

Mainfroy having left two sons, as yet in their infancy, Roger wished to get rid of them, fearing that when they should arrive at a more advanced age, the desire of revenging their father, would induce them to revive a faction which was not so much quelled, but that it might occasion new troubles in the state. He imparted his design to the senator Leontio Siffredi, his minister, who, to divert him from putting it in execution, undertook the education of prince Henriquez, the eldest, and advised him to commit the youngest, who was called Don Pedro, to the care of the constable of Sicily. Roger, persuaded that his nephews would be brought up by these men in that submission and duty which they owed to him, left the princes to their conduct, and took upon himself the care of his niece Constantia, who was of the same age with Henriquez, and only daughter of the princess Matilda; he furnished her with women and masters, and spared nothing in her education.

Leontio Siffredi had a castle two short leagues from Palermo, at a place called Belmont:

Digitized by Google

mont: and there that miniſter employed himſelf in rendering Henriquez worthy of mounting one day the throne of Sicily. He ſoon obſerved in that prince, ſuch amiable qualities, that he applied himſelf to the cultivation of them as cloſely as if he had had no children of his own. He was bleſſed, however, with two daughters; the eldeſt of whom, called Blanch, younger by a year than the prince, was adorned with the moſt perfect beauty: the other named Portia, whoſe birth occaſioned her mother's death, was ſtill in the cradle. Blanch, and prince Henriquez, as ſoon as they were capable of love entertained a mutual paſſion; though they had not the liberty of converſing in private. The prince, however, did not fail to find opportunities ſometimes; and knew ſo well how to profit by thoſe precious moments, that he engaged the daughter of Siffredi to allow him to execute a project he had formed. Juſt about this time, it happened that Leontio was obliged, by the king's orders, to make a journey into one of the moſt remote provinces of the iſland: and during his abſence, Henriquez cauſed an opening to be made in the wall of his apartment, that was contiguous to the chamber of Blanch; ſupplying it with a ſliding partition of wood, that opened and ſhut, without being perceived; becauſe it was ſo cloſely joined to the ceiling, that the eye could not diſcover the artifice. A ſkilful architect whom the prince had made his

Digitized by Google

his friend, performed the work with equal diligence and ſecreſy.

Through this paſſage, the amorous Henriques introduced himſelf ſometimes into the chamber of his miſtreſs: but he did not abuſe her favour: for though ſhe was imprudent enough to allow him a private entrance into her apartment, ſhe did not condeſcend ſo far, until he had aſſured her, that he would never aſk any thing that innocence could not grant. One night he found her very uneaſy, becauſe ſhe had heard that Roger was very ill, and had ſent for Siffredi, as high chancellor of the kingdom, in order to intruſt him with his laſt will. She repreſented to herſelf already, her dear Henriquez on the throne, and being afraid of loſing him in that high ſtation, was under the utmoſt anxiety; and the tears ſtood in her eyes when he appeared. "Heavens! you weep, madam: what muſt I think of that ſorrow with which I ſee you overwhelmed?" "Sir (replied Blanch) I cannot conceal my alarms: the king, your uncle, will ſoon ceaſe to live, and you will ſucceed him. When I, therefore, foreſee how far your new greatneſs will remove you from me, I own, I cannot be unconcerned. A monarch ſeldom beholds things with a lover's eye, and that which was his utmoſt ambition while he was a ſubject, affects him but ſlightly when he is on the throne. Whether it be an unhappy preſage, or reaſon only that inſpires me, I feel my ſoul agitated with emotions that all my confidence in your

Digitized by Google

goodneſs cannot aſſuage; and though I dare not doubt your generoſity, I cannot help diſtruſting my own deſtiny."—" Adorable Blanch! (replied the prince) your fears are obliging, and juſtify my attachment to your charms; but the exceſs of your doubts injures my love, and (if I may be allowed to ſay ſo) the eſteem which you owe me. No! think not that my deſtiny and your's can ever be ſeparated. Believe, rather, that you will always be the object of my happineſs and joy. Lay aſide your fear, therefore, and let it not diſturb ſuch endearing moments."—" Ah, Sir! (anſwered the daughter of Leontio) as ſoon as you are crowned, your ſubjects, perhaps, will demand for your queen a princeſs deſcended from a long race of kings, whoſe ſplended nuptials may add new realms to your's; and, perhaps, alas! you will anſwer their expectation, even at the expenſe of your inclination." " Ah! why (replied Henriquez, with ſome warmth) why are you thus prone to torment yourſelf, by raiſing ſuch an afflicting image of what will never happen? ſhould heaven diſpoſe of the king my uncle, and make me maſter of Sicily, I ſwear that I will eſpouſe you in Palermo, in preſence of all my court, and I invoke all that is ſacred to confirm my oath."

Siffredi's daughter was cheared by the proteſtations of Henriquez, and the reſt of their converſation turned on the kings diſtemper: on which occaſion, Henriquez diſcovered the good-

Digitized by Google

goodneſs of his heart, in lamenting his uncle's fate, with which he had no great reaſon to be affected; the force of blood making him regret a prince, by whoſe death he ſhould acquire a crown. Blanch, as yet, did not know all the misfortunes that threatened her. The conſtable of Sicily had met her coming out of her father's apartment, one day, when he was at the caſtle of Belmont on ſome important affairs, was captivated with her beauty, and next day demanded her in marriage of Siffredi, who conſented to the match; but Roger's diſtemper intervening, the nuptials were deferred, and Blanch knew nothing of the matter.

One morning, juſt as Henriquez had done dreſſing, he was ſurprized to ſee Leontio, followed by Blanch, come into his apartment. "Sir (ſaid that miniſter to him) the news I bring is afflicting, but the conſolation with which they are attended, ought to moderate your grief. The king your uncle is dead, after having left you heir to his ſceptre, and Sicily is ſubject to your ſway. The grandees of the realm, who attend your orders at Palermo, have commiſſioned me to receive them from your mouth, and I am come, Sir, with my daughter, the firſt of your new ſubjects, to offer our early and ſincere homage". The prince, who knew very well that Roger had laboured two months under a diſeaſe that gradually conſumed him, was not much ſurprized at this piece of news: nevertheleſs,

Digitized by Google

ſtruck with the ſudden change of his condition, he felt a thouſand confuſed emotions riſe within his breaſt; and having muſed ſome time, broke ſilence, by addreſſing himſelf to Leontio in theſe words: "Sage Siffredi, I ſhall always look upon you as my father, glory in regulating my conduct by your counſel, and you ſhall be as much a king in Sicily as I am." So ſaying, he advanced to a table, on which there was a ſtandiſh, and taking a ſheet of paper, wrote his name at the bottom of the page. "What are you about to do, Sir?" (ſaid Siffredi to him.) "I am going to manifeſt my gratitude and eſteem (anſwered Henriquez, preſenting the ſheet to Blanch, and ſaying) Receive, madam, this pledge of my faith, and of the empire over my inclinations, which I now yield to you." Blanch took it, bluſhing, and made this anſwer to the prince: "I receive with reſpect the favours of my king; but I depend upon a father: and I hope your majeſty will not take it ill, that I depoſit this paper in his hands, to be uſed as his prudence ſhall direct him.

She accordingly gave the ſubſcription of Henriquez to her father, who then obſerved what, till that moment, had eſcaped his penetration. He diſcerned the prince's ſentiments, and ſaid to him, "Your majeſty ſhall have no cauſe to reproach me, for I will not abuſe the confidence."—"My dear Leontio (cried Henriquez, interrupting him) don't imagine you can abuſe it. Whatever uſe you ſhall make of

Digitized by Google

of the paper, I will approve of your determination. But, go (added he) return to Palermo, order the preparations to be made for my coronation, and tell my ſubjects, that I will follow you immediately thither, in order to receive their oaths of allegiance, and aſſure them of my affection." The miniſter obeyed his new maſter's orders, and, with his daughter, ſet out for Palermo.

A few hours after their departure, the prince took the ſame road, more engroſſed by his love, than by the high rank to which he was raiſed. As ſoon as he arrived in the city, he was ſaluted with innumerable ſhouts of joy, and, amidſt the acclamations of his people, entered the palace, where every thing was already prepared for the ceremony, and where he found the princeſs Conſtantia in deep mourning, and, to all appearance, very much affected with Roger's death. As they owed one another a mutual compliment of condolance on the event, they both acquitted themſelves very handſomely; but it was more cold on the ſide of Henriquez, than on that of Conſtantia; who, in ſpite of the enmity ſubſiſting between their families, could not hate the prince. He placed himſelf on the throne, and the princeſs ſat on his right hand, in an elbow chair not quite ſo high. The grandees of the kingdom took their places, each according to his rank: the ceremony began, and Leontio, as high chancellor of the ſtate, and keeper of the late king's will, opened and read

Digitized by Google

it with an audible voice. This deed contained in ſubſtance, that Roger, ſeeing himſelf without iſſue, named the eldeſt ſon of Mainfroy for his ſucceſſor, on condition that he ſhould eſpouſe the Princeſs Conſtantia; which, if he refuſed to perform, he ſhould forfeit the crown of Sicily to the infant Don Pedro, his brother, who ſhould enjoy it on the ſame terms.

Henriquez was confounded at theſe words; the reſtriction gave him incredible pain, which became ſtill more violent, when Leontio, after having read the will, pronounced to the whole aſſembly: "My lords, having reported the laſt intentions of the late king, to our new monarch, that generous prince conſents to honour his couſin the princeſs Conſtantia, with his hand."—At theſe words, Henriquez interrupted the chancellor, ſaying, "Leontio, remember the writing which Blanch"—"Sir (ſaid Siffredi with precipitation, before the prince had time to explain himſelf) here it is. The grandees of the realm (added he, ſhowing the paper to the aſſembly) will here ſee by your majeſty's auguſt ſignature, the eſteem you have for the princeſs, and the deference you pay to the laſt will of the deceaſed king, your uncle."—Having ſpoke theſe words, he read the deed with which he himſelf had filled the paper, containing the moſt ſolemn engagement to marry Conſtantia, conformable to the intention of Roger. The hall rung with repeated ſhouts of all preſent, who cried, "Long live

Digitized by Google

live our magnanimous king Henriquez." For, as nobody was ignorant of the averſion which that prince had always manifeſted for the princeſs, it was feared, not without reaſon, that he would revolt againſt the condition of the will, and by theſe means raiſe commotions in the kingdom. But the reading of the paper entirely compoſed the minds of the nobles and people, and excited thoſe general acclamations which in ſecret tortured the monarch's ſoul.

Conſtantia, who, both on account of her own glory, and her paſſion for Henriquez, enjoyed the public ſatisfaction more than any body, choſe this time to aſſure him of her gratitude. But the prince, in vain endeavouring to conſtrain himſelf, received her compliment with great affliction, and was, indeed, in ſuch diſorder, that he could not even perform what decency required. At laſt, yielding to the violence of his paſſion, he approached Siffredi, whom the duty of his office obliged to be pretty near his perſon, and, with a low voice, ſaid, "What have you done, Leontio? The ſubſcription, which I put into your daughter's hands, was not intended for this uſe. You have betrayed"—"Sir (ſaid Siffredi, interrupting him in a reſolute tone) conſider your own glory? If you refuſe to follow the will of the king your uncle, you loſe the crown of Sicily." He had no ſooner ſpoke in this manner, than he removed at a greater diſtance from the king, that he might not have an op-

Digitized by Google

portunity to reply. Henriquez remained in the utmoſt perplexity, and felt himſelf agitated by contrary emotions. He was incenſed againſt Siffredi, he could not reſolve to abandon Blanch; but, diſtracted between her and the intereſt of his glory, it was ſome time before he could come to any reſolution. However, he was determined at laſt, and thought he had fallen upon a method to preſerve the daughter of Siffredi, without renouncing the throne. He feigned ſubmiſſion to the will of Roger, and purpoſed, while a diſpenſation for his marriage with his couſin ſhould be ſoliciting at Rome, to gain the nobles of the realm by his bounty, and eſtabliſh his power ſo well, that he ſhould not be obliged to fulfil its conditions.

As ſoon as he had formed this deſign, he became more tranqil, and turning to Conſtantia, confirmed to her what the high chancellor had read before the whole aſſembly. But in the very moment, when he betrayed himſelf ſo far as to plight his troth to her, Blanch arrived in the council-hall. She came thither by her father's command, to pay her reſpects to the princeſs, and her ears were ſtruck with the words of Henriquez, at her firſt entrance. Beſides, Leontio, being deſirous that ſhe ſhould have no cauſe to doubt of her misfortune, ſaid, while he preſented her to Conſtantia, "Daughter, do homage to your queen, and wiſh her all the ſweets of a flouriſhing reign and happy marriage." This terrible

Digitized by Google

terrible ſtroke overwhelmed the unfortunate Blanch: in vain ſhe endeavoured to conceal her grief; ſhe bluſhed and grew pale alternately, and ſhook through every limb. Nevertheleſs, the princeſs had not the leaſt ſuſpicion of the cauſe, but attributed the diſorder in which ſhe paid her compliment, to the perplexity of a young creature bred up in ſolitude, and altogether unaccuſtomed to the court. It was quite otherwiſe with the young king: the ſight of Blanch abaſhed him; and the deſpair he obſerved in her eyes tranſported him quite beſide himſelf. He did not doubt that, judging by appearances, ſhe believed him unfaithful. He would have been leſs uneaſy could he have ſpoke to her; but how could he find an opportunity, when all Sicily, as one may ſay, had its eyes upon him. Beſides, the cruel Siffredi deprived him of that hope: for reading the thoughts of theſe two lovers in their looks, and willing to prevent the miſchief which the violence of their paſſion might create in the ſtate, that miniſter in an artful manner, carried his daughter out of the aſſembly, and ſet out with her, on his return to Belmont; reſolved, for more reaſons than one, to have her married as ſoon as poſſible.

They were no ſooner arrived, than he made her acqcainted with all the horror of her fate, by declaring that he had promiſed her in marriage to the Conſtable. "Juſt heaven! (cried ſhe, in a tranſport of grief, which her father's

Digitized by Google

preſtnce could not ſuppreſs) for what direful puniſhment is the unfortunate Blanch reſerved." Her deſpair was even ſo violent, as to ſuſpend all the faculties of her ſoul. She was ſeized with an univerſal chilneſs, and becoming clay cold and wan, ſwooned away in the arms of her father. He was affected with her condition; but, though he ſhared her affliction with all the tenderneſs of a parent, his firſt reſolution ſtill remained unſhaken. Blanch, at length, recovered her ſpirits, more through the exquiſite ſenſation of her grief, than through the water which Siffredi ſprinkled on her face; which perceiving, while ſhe opened her languiſhing eyes, "Sir (ſaid ſhe, with a feeble voice) I am aſhamed that you have ſeen my weakneſs; but death, which muſt ſoon end my torments, will, in a little time, rid you of an unhappy daughter', who has dared to diſpoſe of her heart without your conſent!"—"No, my dear Blanch (replied Leontio) live and let virtue reſume its empire in your breaſt. The conſtable's paſſion does you honour; it is the moſt conſiderable match in the kingdom."—"I eſteem his perſon and his merit (ſaid Blanch, interrupting him) but, Sir, the king had made me hope."—"Daughter (ſaid Siffredi, cutting her ſhort, in his turn) I know all that you can ſay on that ſubject. I am not ignorant of your tenderneſs for the prince, which, at another conjuncture, I ſhould not diſapprove. You ſhould even ſee me eager to enſure you of the hand of Hen-

Digitized by Google

Henriquez, if the intereſt of his glory, and that of the ſtate, did not oblige him to beſtow it on Conſtantia. It is on that condition only, that the late king deſigned him for his ſucceſſor; and would you have him prefer you to the crown of Sicily? Believe me, I ſympathize with you in the cruel ſtroke you ſuffer, but ſince we cannot withſtand the decrees of deſtiny, make one generous effort. Your glory is concerned, in concealing from the kingdom the vain hope with which you flattered yourſelf. Your ſenſibility for the king may raiſe reports to your diſadvantage: and the only means of preventing them will be to marry the Conſtable. In ſhort, Blanch, this is no time to deliberate. The king yields you for a throne, and marries Conſtantia. The Conſtable has my promiſe, which I beg you will perform; and if I muſt uſe my authority to bring you to this reſolution, I order you to comply."

So ſaying, he left her to reflect upon what ſhe had heard, hoping, that after having maturely conſidered the arguments he had uſed, to ſupport her virtue againſt her inclination, ſhe would reſolve, of herſelf, to give her hand to the Conſtable. In this he was not miſtaken. But, what pangs did it coſt the melancholy Blanch, before ſhe came to that determination! She was in a condition, which, of all others, was moſt worthy of compaſſion! Grief for ſeeing her preſages of the infidelity of Henriquez changed into certainty,

Digitized by Google

and for being conſtrained, in loſing him, to give herſelf away to another, whom ſhe could not love, created in her ſuch violent tranſports of affliction, that every moment was attended with new torture. "If my misfortune is certain (cried ſhe) how can I reſiſt it without dying? Cruel deſtiny! why was I fed with the moſt delicious hope, when I was doomed to ſuch an abyſs of miſery! and thou perfidious lover! how durſt thou betrothe thyſelf to another, after thou hadſt promiſed eternal fidelity to me? haſt thou ſo ſoon forgot the faith which thou haſt ſworn? As a puniſhment for having ſo cruelly deceived me, may heaven make the nuptial bed, which thou art going to ſtain with perjury, not a ſcene of pleaſure, but remorſe! may the careſſes of Conſtantia convey poiſon to thy unfaithful heart! and may thy marriage be as baleful as mine! Yes, traitor, I will eſpouſe the Conſtable, whom I cannot love, to revenge me upon myſelf, and puniſh me, for having ſo indiſcretely choſen the object of my love. Since my religion forbids me to make an attempt upon my life, the days I have to live ſhall be nothing elſe than an unhappy ſeries of trouble and diſquiet. If thou ſtill preſerveſt any tenderneſs for me, thou wilt be mortified at ſeeing me throw myſelf into the arms of another; and if thou haſt entirely forgot me, Sicily, at leaſt, may boaſt of having produced a woman, who puniſhed herſelf for having too ſimply diſpoſed of her heart."

In

Digitized by Google

In ſuch a ſituation did this unhappy victim of love and duty paſs the night that preceeded her marriage with the Conſtable; and Siffredi finding her next day ready to comply with his deſire, made haſte to take the advantage of that favourable diſpoſition. He ſent for the Conſtable to Belmont that ſame day, and married him privately to his daughter in the chapel of the caſtle. It was not enough to renounce a crown, to loſe for ever a perſon whom ſhe loved, and beſtow herſelf upon the object of her hatred, but ſhe was alſo obliged to diſſemble her ſentiments before a huſband who was inflamed with the moſt ardent paſſion for her, and naturally of a jealous diſpoſition. That ſpouſe, charmed with the poſſeſſion of what he held moſt dear, was continually in her company, and did not even allow her the ſad conſolation of bewailing her misfortune in ſecret. When night approached, the daughter of Leontio felt her affliction redouble: but what were her pangs, when her woman after having undreſſed, left her alone with the Conſtable! He aſked, in a reſpectful manner, the cauſe of that ſorrow with which ſhe ſeemed to be depreſſed; and Blanch, perplexed by the queſtion, feigned herſelf indiſpoſed. This deceived her huſband at firſt, but he did not long continue in his miſtake: for, as he was really concerned at the condition in which he ſaw her, and preſſed her to go to bed, his intreaties, which ſhe miſinterpreted, preſented ſuch a cruel image

Digitized by Google

image to her imagination, that, being unable to contain herſelf any longer, ſhe gave free vent to her ſighs and tears. What a ſight was this for a man, who believed himſelf at the very ſummit of his happineſs! He no longer doubted that the affliction of his wife portended ſomething ſiniſter to his love. Nevertheleſs, though the knowledge of it threw him into a ſituation almoſt as deplorable as that of Blanch, he had ſuch command of himſelf, that he concealed his ſuſpicions. He redoubled his intreaties, and continued to preſs his ſpouſe to go to reſt, aſſuring her, that he would not interrupt the repoſe which ſhe ſeemed ſo much to want. He even offered to call her women, if ſhe thought that their aſſiſtance could alleviate her indiſpoſition. Blanch, encouraged by this promiſe, told him, that her preſent weakneſs only required a little ſleep. He pretended to believe her, and going to bed together, they paſſed a night very different from thoſe which Cupid and Hymen beſtow on two lovers inſpired by mutual paſſion.

While Siffredi's daughter indulged her ſorrow, the conſtable endeavoured within himſelf, to divine the cauſe that rendered his marriage ſo unhappy. He concluded, that there was a rival in the caſe; but was bewildered in his own imagination, when he attempted to diſcover who that rival was; and the ſole reſult of his conjectures was, that he was the moſt unhappy of all mankind. He had already

Digitized by Google

ready ſpent two thirds of the night in theſe agitations when his ears were ſtruck with a hollow noiſe; and he was not a little ſurpriſed to hear ſomebody walking ſoftly in the chamber. He believed himſelf miſtaken; for he remembered that he himſelf had locked the door, after Blanch's women had gone, and drew back the curtain to diſcover by the evidence of his eyes, the cauſe of the noiſe which he heard: but the light which had been left in the chimney, was extinguiſhed, and in a little time, he heard the name of Blanch repeated ſeveral times in a ſoft and languiſhing tone. Then his jealous ſuſpicions were inflamed to fury, and his honour alarmed, obliging him to riſe, in order to prevent an affront or take vengeance for it; he ſeized his ſword, and moved towards that ſide whence the voice ſeemed to come. Feeling a naked ſword oppoſed to his own, he advanced, the other retired, he purſued, and the other vaniſhed from his purſuit. In vain did he ſearch for him, who ſeemed to fly, through all the corners of the room as much as the darkneſs would allow; he could not find him; he ſtopped, liſtened, and heard nothing. All ſeemed to be enchantment; he went to the door, which he imagined had favoured the flight of the ſecret enemy of his honour, but he found it faſt locked as before. Not being able to comprehend any thing of this adventure, he called thoſe of his people, who were neareſt, and as he opened the door for that purpoſe, ſtood in the

Digitized by Google

the paſſage, and kept himſelf on his guard, that the perſon whom he ſought might not eſcape.

Some ſervants, hearing his repeated cries, came running with lights: upon which he took a candle, and made a new ſearch in the chamber, ſword in hand; but found nobody, nor the leaſt mark of any perſon's having been there. He did not even perceive the private door, nor the opening through which there was a paſſage. He could not, however, blindfold himſelf, with regard to the circumſtances of his misfortune, but remained in a ſtrange confuſion of thoughts. Should he have recourſe to Blanch, ſhe was too much concerned in the truth, for him to expect an explanation from her. He, therefore, reſolved to go and open his heart to Leontio, after having diſmiſſed his ſervants, telling them, that he thought he had heard a noiſe in his chamber, but was miſtaken. He met his father-in-law coming out of his apartment, at the diſturbance he had heard, and recounted to him what had happened, with all the marks of extreme agitation and profound grief.

Siffredi was ſurprized at the adventure, which, though it did not ſeem natural, he nevertheleſs believed; and thinking that the king's love was capable of any thing, was very much afflicted with that conſideration. But, far from flattering the jealous ſuſpicions of his ſon-in-law, he repreſented to him, with an air of aſſurance, that the voice, which he thought

Digitized by Google

thought he heard, and the ſword that was oppoſed to his, could be no other than phantoms of an imagination miſled by jealouſy; for it was impoſſible that any body could have gone into his daughter's chamber; that with regard to the melancholy which he had obſerved in his wife, it might be occaſioned by ſome indiſpoſition; that honour ought not to be anſwerable for the viciſſitudes of temper; that the change of condition in a girl uſed to live in ſolitude, who ſees herſelf on a ſudden delivered to a man, whom ſhe had not had time to know and to love, might be the cauſe of thoſe tears, ſighs, and that ſharp affliction, of which he complained; that love was not to be kindled, in maidens of a noble birth, by any other means than time and aſſiduity; for which reaſons he exorted him to calm his diſquiet, redouble his tenderneſs and care, in order to diſpoſe Blanch to become more ſenſible of his merit: and intreated him to return to his chamber, being perſuaded that his uneaſineſs and diſtruſt were injuries done to the virtue of his wife.

The Conſtable made no anſwer to the remonſtrances of his father-in-law; whether he really began to think that he might have been impoſed upon by the diſorder of his mind, or judged it a wiſer courſe to diſſemble than to undertake, in vain, to convince the old man of an event ſo void of all probability. He returned to his apartment, lay down by his wife, and tried to obtain, by ſleep, ſome reſpite from

Digitized by Google

from his disquiet. Blanch, on her side was not less uneasy than he: she had but too well heard that which alarmed her husband, and could not consider as an illusion an adventure, the secret and motives of which she knew.—Surprized that Henriquez should seek to introduce himself into her apartment, after having so solemnly pledged his faith to Constantia, instead of approving or feeling the least glimpse of joy at this step, she looked upon it as a new outrage, and her heart was incensed against him.

Whilst the daughter of Siffredi, prejudiced against the young king, believed him the most unfaithful of men, that unhappy prince, more in love than ever, wished for an interview with Blanch, in order to encourage her against the appearances that condemned him. He would have come sooner to Belmont for that purpose, had he been permitted by the multiplicity of business in which he was necessarily engaged; but he could not steal away from court before that night. He was too well acquainted with all the private corners of a place where he had been educated, to be under any difficulty of getting unseen into Siffredi's castle; and he still kept the key of a private door that belonged to the garden, through which he got into his old apartment, from whence he passed into the chamber of Blanch.—You may imagine the astonishment of that prince when he found a man there, and felt a sword opposed to his own. He had well nigh discovered himself, and

Digitized by Google

and punished on the spot the audacious wretch, who durst lift his sacrilegious hand against his lawful king; but the respect he owed to Leontio's daughter suspended his resentment. He retired in the same manner as he had entered, and, more afflicted than ever, took the road to Palermo; where arriving some moments before day, he shut himself up in his apartment. But the agitation of his spirits depriving him of rest, he resolved to return to Belmont; his safety, honour, and above all, his love, not permitting him to remain longer ignorant of the least circumstance of such a cruel adventure.

It was no sooner day than he commanded his hunting-equipage to be got ready, and, under pretence of taking that diversion, rode far into the forest of Belmont, attended by his sportsmen and some courtiers. He followed the chase some time, the better to conceal his design; and when he saw every one eagerly engaged at the heels of the hounds, he separated himself from them, and, all alone, took his way to Leontio's castle. He was too well acquainted with the paths of the forest to lose himself, and his impatience not permitting him to spare his horse, he in a little time overrun the distance which separated him from the object of his love. He was just inventing some plausible pretext to procure for himself a private interview with the daughter of Siffredi, when, crossing a small road that led by one of the park-gates, he perceived hard by two

Digitized by Google

two women ſitting in cloſe converſation at the root of a tree. As he did not doubt that theſe people belonged to the caſtle, the ſight of them raiſed within him ſome emotion: but he was much more tranſported, when, the women turning towards him at the noiſe of his horſe's feet, he knew one of them to be his dear Blanch, who had eſcaped from the caſtle with Niſa, one of her women, who enjoyed the greateſt ſhare of her confidence, to bewail her misfortune at full liberty.

He flew—he threw himſelf headlong (if I may uſe the expreſſion) at her feet; and perceiving in her eyes all the marks of the moſt profound affliction, was melted at the ſight. "Fair Blanch (ſaid he) ſuſpend the emotions of your grief: appearances, I confeſs, repreſent me guilty to your eyes: but when you are made acquainted with the deſign which I have formed in your behalf, that which you now look upon as a crime, will appear to you a proof of my innocence and exceſs of love." Theſe words, which Henriquez thought capable of moderating, ſerved only to redouble the affliction of Blanch, who would have anſwered him, had not her voice been choaked up with her ſighs. The prince, aſtoniſhed at her diſorder, ſaid, "How, madam, can't I, then, calm your diſquiet? By what misfortune have I loſt your confidence? I, who hazard my crown, and even my life, to keep myſelf yours!" 'Twas then that the daughter of Siffredi, making an effort to explain herſelf, replied,

Digitized by Google

plied, "Sir, your promiſes are now unſeaſonable. Nothing, henceforth, can bind my deſtiny to your's."—"Ah, Blanch! (ſaid Henriquez, interrupting her with warmth) what cruel words are theſe I hear! Who dares raviſh you from my love? Who dares oppoſe the fury of a king, who would put all Sicily in flames, rather than ſuffer you to be torn from his hopes?"—"All your power, Sir (anſwered Siffredi's daughter in a languiſhing manner) cannot remove the obſtacles by which we are ſeparated. I am the Conſtable's wife."—"The Conſtable's wife!" (cried the prince ſtaggering backwards, and unable to go on.) He was confounded and overwhelmed by this unexpected blow: his ſtrength forſook him, and he dropped down at the root of a tree that grew behind him. Pale, trembling, and depreſſed, he had nothing free but his eyes, which he fixed upon Blanch in ſuch a manner as gave her to underſtand how deeply affected he was with the unhappy tidings ſhe had declared. She, on the other hand, looked upon him with an air which convinced him, that her emotions were little different from thoſe he felt; and theſe two unfortunate lovers preſerved, between them, a ſilence that had ſomething terible in it. At length the prince, recollecting himſelf a little, by an effort of his courage, reſumed the diſcourſe, and ſaid to Blanch with a ſigh, "What have you done, madam? your credulity has ruined me, and undone yourſelf."

Blanch,

Digitized by Google

Blanch, piqued at the prince's ſeeming to upbraid her, when ſhe thought ſhe had much more cauſe to complain of him, replied, "What, Sir! do you add diſſimulation to infidelity? Would you have me diſcredit my own eyes and ears, and believe you innocent, in ſpite of the evidence of my ſenſes? No, Sir, I own myſelf incapable of ſuch an effort of reaſon."—"Nevertheleſs, Madam (anſwered the king) you are impoſed upon by theſe very witneſſes which ſeem ſo faithful; even they have aſſiſted in betraying you; and that I am innocent and faithful, is no leſs true than that you are the conſtable's wife."—"How, Sir! (ſaid ſhe) did I not hear you confirm to Conſtantia the preſent of your hand and heart? Have you not aſſured the nobles of the kingdom, that you would fulfil the conditions of the late king's will? and has not the princeſs received the homage of your new ſubjects, in quality of queen and ſpouſe of Henriquez? Were mine eyes then bewitched? Say, ſay, rather, unfaithful prince! that you did not think Blanch ought to balance in your heart the intereſt of a throne, and, without ſtooping to feign a paſſion that you no longer feel, and perhaps never felt, confeſs that the crown of Sicily appeared to you more fixed with Conſtantia than with Leontio's daughter.—You are in the right, Sir: a ſhining throne was no more my due than the heart of a prince, ſuch as you are. I was too vain to pretend to either; but you ought not to have indulged

me

Digitized by Google

me in my error.—You know the alarms I felt on account of loſing you; a misfortune that then ſeemed to me almoſt inevitable. Why did you encourage me with hope? Would to heavens my fears had not been diſſipated! I ſhould have accuſed fortune, not you; and you would have, at leaſt, preſerved my heart, though at the expence of an hand which no other ſhould ever have obtained. It is now no time to juſtify yourſelf: I am the conſtable's wife; and that I may ſpare myſelf the conſequence of a converſation that makes my glory bluſh; give me leave, Sir, without failing in that reſpect that I owe to you, to quit the preſence of a prince, whom I am no longer at liberty to hear."

So ſaying, ſhe left Henriquez with as much haſte as her preſent weak condition would allow. "Stop, madam! (cried he) and do not drive to deſpair a prince, who will rather overturn that throne, which you upbraid him with having preferred to you, than fulfil the expectation of his new ſubjects."—"That ſacrifice (ſaid Blanch) is at preſent vain. While I am married to the conſtable theſe generous tranſports will not avail: ſince I am then no longer at liberty, it is of ſmall importance to me that you reduce Sicily to aſhes, or to whom you give your hand. If I have been weak enough to let my heart be ſurprized, I ſhall at leaſt have fortitude enough to ſtifle its emotions, and let the new king of Sicily ſee, that the conſtable's wife is no longer the lover of prince

Digitized by Google

prince Henriquez." When ſhe pronounced theſe words, being cloſe to the park gate, ſhe entered it of a ſudden with Niſa; and, locking it on the other ſide, left the prince overwhelmed with ſorrow. He could not recover the blow which Blanch had given him, by the account of her marriage. "Unjuſt Blanch! (cried he) you have loſt all remembrance of our mutual engagement! In ſpite of our reciprocal vows, we are for ever parted; and the idea which I had cheriſhed of poſſeſſing your charms, was no more than a vain illuſion. Ah, cruel maid! how dearly did I buy your approbation of my flame!"

Then the image of his rival's happineſs preſented itſelf to his fancy, with all the horrors of jealouſy; which took ſuch full poſſeſſion of his ſoul for ſome moments, that he was on the point of ſacrificing the conſtable, and even Siffredi himſelf, to his reſentment. Reaſon, however, by degrees, allayed the violence of his tranſports: but the impoſſibility he perceived of baniſhing from Blanch the impreſſions ſhe retained of his infidelity, threw him again into deſpair. He flattered himſelf with the hopes of effacing them, provided he could converſe with her at liberty; for which purpoſe, judging it neceſſary to remove the conſtable, he reſolved to have him apprehended, as a perſon ſuſpected of deſigns againſt the ſtate. He accordingly charged with this office the captain of his guards, who, repairing to Belmont, ſecured his perſon in the twi-

Digitized by Google

twilight, and brought him priſoner to the caſtle of Palermo.

This incident filled all Belmont with conſternation. Siffredi ſet out immediately to offer himſelf to the king, as ſecurity for his ſon-in-law, and to repreſent the troubleſome conſequences of ſuch an arreſt. The prince, who expected this ſtep of his miniſter, and who was reſolved, at all events, to obtain a free interview with Blanch, before the Conſtable ſhould be releaſed, had expreſsly ordered, that no perſon whatever ſhould ſpeak with him till next day. But, Leontio, notwithſtanding this order, finding means to get acceſs to the king's chamber, preſented himſelf before him, ſaying, "Sir, if a loyal and reſpectful ſubject may be allowed to complain of his maſter, I am come to complain of you to yourſelf. What crime has my ſon-in-law committed? Has your majeſty duly reflected on the eternal reproach you have fixed upon my family; and on the conſequences of an impriſonment, which may alienate from your ſervice the hearts of thoſe who fill the moſt important poſts of the realm?"—"I have certain intelligence (replied the king) that the Conſtable carries on a criminal correſpondence with the Infant Don Pedro."—"Criminal correſpondence! (cried Leontio, with ſurprize) Do not believe it. Your majeſty is impoſed upon: treaſon never entered the family of Siffredi; and the Conſtable's being my ſon-in-law is enough to ſcreen him from all ſuſ-

Digitized by Google

picion.—The Conſtable is innocent; but other ſecret views have induced you to arreſt him."

"Since you talk to me ſo freely (replied the king) I will ſpeak to you in the ſame manner.—You complain of the Conſtable's being impriſoned: what! have I not more cauſe to complain of your cruelty? 'Tis you, barbarous Siffredi! who have robbed me of my quiet, and reduced me, by your officious cares, to a condition that makes me envy the loweſt of mankind. But don't flatter yourſelf that I will enter into your ſchemes—my marriage with Conſtantia is reſolved upon in vain."—"How, Sir! (cried Leontio, trembling) can you refuſe to marry the princeſs, after having flattered her with that hope before your whole people?"—"If I deceive their expectation (replied the king) aſcribe it ſolely to yourſelf. Why did you lay me under a neceſſity of promiſing that which I could not perform? Who compelled you to fill a paper, which I gave your daughter, with the name of Conſtantia? You was not ignorant of my intention—You tyrannized over the heart of Blanch, in making her marry a man whom ſhe did not love. But what right had you to diſpoſe of mine, in favour of a princeſs whom I hate? Have you forgot that ſhe is the daughter of that cruel Matilda, who, trampling under her feet all the ties of blood and humanity, made my father breathe his laſt under all the rigours of captivity? and ſhall I eſpouſe her? No, Siffredi! lay aſide that hope.

Digitized by Google

hope.—Before you ſee the torch of theſe direful nuptials lighted, you will ſee all Sicily in flames, and its aſhes quenched in blood!"

"What do I hear! (cried Leontio) Ah, Sir! what a proſpect have you ſhown me! What terrible threats!—But I am unſeaſonably alarmed (added he in another tone) you love your ſubjects too well, to entail upon them ſuch miſery. You will not allow yourſelf to be overcome by love.—You will not tarniſh your virtues with the weakneſſes of ordinary men. If I have beſtowed my daughter on the conſtable, it was done, Sir, with a view of acquiring for your majeſty a valiant ſubject, who can ſupport with his arm, and the troops which are at his diſpoſal, your intereſt againſt that of the prince, Don Pedro. I thought that in attaching him to my family, by ſuch intimate ties—"—"Ah! theſe are the ties (cried the prince Henriquez) theſe are the fatal ties that have undone me! Cruel friend! why did you inflict ſuch a heavy ſtroke upon me? Did I order you to manage my concerns at the expence of my heart? Why did you not leave me to ſupport my rights by myſelf? Did I want courage to reduce thoſe who ſhould rebel againſt me? I ſhould have known how to puniſh the conſtable, had he diſobeyed me. I know that kings ought not to be tyrants, and that the happineſs of their people ſhould be their chief aim; but muſt they therefore be the ſlaves of their ſubjects, and, from the moment that heaven chooſes

Digitized by Google

them to govern, loſe the right that nature grants to all men, of diſpoſing their affections as they pleaſe? Ah! if they muſt not enjoy the privilege of the loweſt claſs of mortals, take back, Siffredi, that ſovereign power which you would confirm at the expence of my repoſe."

"You know very well Sir (replied the miniſter) that your marriage with the princeſs was, by the late king, made the condition of your ſucceſſion to the crown."—"And what right (anſwered Henriquez) had he to eſtabliſh that condition? Had he received ſuch an unworthy law, when he ſucceeded to his brother King Charles? And how came you to be ſo weak as to ſubmit to the unjuſt condition? For, an high chancellor, methinks, you are very ill informed of our cuſtoms. In a word, though I have promiſed my hand to Conſtantia, it was not a voluntary engagement, therefore I do not intend to keep my word; and if Don Pedro, from my refuſal, conceives the hopes of mounting my throne, wirhout engaging the people in a quarrel, which might coſt too much blood, let the ſword decide, in ſingle combat, which of us is moſt worthy to reign." Leontio, not daring to urge him any farther, contented himſelf with aſking, on his knees, the enlargement of his ſon-in-law, which he obtained. "Go (ſaid the king to him) return to Belmont, whither the Conſtable will ſoon follow you." The miniſter went away, and got back

Digitized by Google

back to Belmont, perſuaded that his ſon-in-law would not be long behind him. But in this he was miſtaken: Henriquez reſolved to ſee Blanch that night, and therefore deferred the releaſe of her huſband till next day.

Mean while the Conſtable was tortured with the moſt cruel reflections: his impriſonment had opened his eyes with regard to the true cauſe of his misfortune: he, therefore, abandoned himſelf entirely to his jealouſy: and renouncing the allegiance he had hitherto ſo commendably preſerved, breathed nothing but vengeance. As he concluded that the king would not fail of being with Blanch that night, in order to ſurprize them together, he begged the governor of the caſtle of Palermo, to let him go out, aſſuring him that he would return to priſon next morning before day. The governor, who was entirely devoted to him, conſented to this the more eaſily, as he knew that Siffredi had already obtained his liberty, and even furniſhed him with a horſe to carry him to Belmont; where the conſtable being arrived, he tied his horſe to a tree, entered the park by a little door, of which he had the key, and was ſo lucky as to get into the caſtle unperceived. He went ſtraight to the apartment of his wife, and concealing himſelf in an antechamber behind a ſcreen, which he found there, propoſed to obſerve from thence all that ſhould paſs, and to appear ſuddenly in Blanch's chamber, at the leaſt noiſe he ſhould hear.—While he was in this ſitua-

Digitized by Google

tion, he ſaw Niſa come out from her miſtreſs, and retire to the cloſet where ſhe lay.

Siffredi's daughter, who had eaſily diſcerned the motive of her huſband's impriſonment, concluded that he would not return that night to Belmont, although her father had told her the king aſſured him the Conſtable would ſet out ſoon after him. She did not doubt that Henriquez would take the advantage of that conjuncture to viſit and converſe with her at liberty; and in this opinion ſhe waited for the prince, in order to reproach him with an action which might have terrible conſequences, in regard to her.—Accordingly, in a little time after Niſa had withdrawn, the partition opened, and the king came and threw himſelf at Blanch's feet, ſaying, "Madam, do not condemn before you have given me the hearing: If I have ordered the Conſtable to be impriſoned, conſider that it was the only means I had left to juſtify myſelf; therefore impute that artifice to yourſelf alone. Why did you, this morning refuſe to hear me? Alas! to-morrow your huſband will be enlarged, and I ſhall never have an opportunity of ſpeaking to you again. Hear me, then, for this laſt time: if the loſs of you makes me the moſt forlorn of mankind, at leaſt grant me the melancholy conſolation of convincing you, that my infidelity is not the cauſe of my misfortune; for though I confirmed to Conſtantia the offer of my hand, it was what I could not diſpenſe with doing, in the ſituation

Digitized by Google

tion to which your father had reduced me.—There was a neceſſity for my deceiving the princeſs, for your intereſt as well as my own, in order to ſecure to you the crown as well as the perſon of your lover. This I flattered myſelf with accompliſhing; and had already taken meaſures to break that fatal engagement; but you have deſtroyed my plan, and by giving yourſelf away too inconſiderately, laid up a fund of eternal ſorrow for two hearts, which might have been rendered happy by the moſt inviolable love!"

He ended this complaint with ſuch viſible marks of real deſpair, that Blanch was touched with his condition, and no longer doubted his innocence, which at firſt gave her ſome joy; but afterwards, ſtung with the conſideration of her misfortune, "Ah, Sir!" (ſaid ſhe to the prince) after the cruel determination of our fate, you increaſe my affliction by letting me know that you were not guilty! What have I done! unfortunate that I am? my reſentment has betrayed me! I thought myſelf abandoned, and in revenge accepted of the Conſtable's hand, which was preſented by my father! I am guilty of the crime, and have been the cauſe of our mutual miſhap! Alas! while I accuſed you of having deceived me, it was I, too credulous lover! it was I who broke thoſe bonds which I had ſworn to keep for ever inviolate! Revenge yourſelf, Sir, in your turn—Hate the ungrateful Blanch—forget her."—"Ah, Madam! (ſaid Henriquez,

Digitized by Google

interrupting her with a melancholy air) how ſhall I find means to tear from my heart a paſſion, which even your injuſtice cannot extinguiſh."—"You muſt, however, Sir, make that effort;" (replied Siffredi's daughter, ſighing.) "What! are you capable of that effort yourſelf;" (ſaid the king.) "I cannot promiſe to ſucceed; (anſwered ſhe) but I will ſpare no pains in the endeavour."—"Ah, cruel Blanch! (ſaid the prince) you will eaſily forget Henriquez, ſince you are able to form ſuch a deſign!"—"And what can you expect? (replied ſhe, in a more reſolute tone.) Do you flatter yourſelf, that I will allow you to continue your addreſſes? No, Sir! abandon that hope. Though I was not born to be a queen, heaven never formed me to liſten to diſhonourable love. My huſband, as well as you, Sir, is deſcended from the noble houſe of Anjou; and if my duty did not raiſe an inſurmountable obſtacle to your gallantry, my glory would hinder me from enduring it: I conjure you, therefore, to retire. We muſt ſee one another no more."—"Heavens! what barbarity! (replied the king.) Ah Blanch is it poſſible that you ſhould treat me with ſuch rigour? You do not think then, that your being in the arms of the Conſtable is enough to overwhelm me! you muſt alſo forbid me your ſight, the only conſolation I had left!" "Fly me, rather, (anſwered the daughter of Siffredi, ſhedding ſome tears) the ſight of what one tenderly loves ceaſes to be pleaſing,

Digitized by Google

ing, when the hope of poſſeſſing it is loſt. Adieu, Sir! Fly from me. You owe that effort to your own glory and my reputation. I aſk it, alſo, for my quiet: for, in ſhort, although my virtue ſhould not be alarmed by the emotions of my heart, the remembrance of your tenderneſs will entail upon me ſuch cruel conflicts, that I ſhall ſcarce have ſtrength enough to maintain them."

She pronounced theſe words ſo paſſionately, that ſhe unwittingly overturned a candleſtick which ſtood on a table behind her; and the candle going out in falling, ſhe took it up in order to light it again, for which purpoſe ſhe opened the door of the antichamber, and went to the cloſet of Niſa, who was not yet gone to bed. The king, who waited for her return, no ſooner ſaw her approach with the light, than he made preſſing inſtances to her, that ſhe would ſuffer his attachment. The Conſtable, hearing the prince's voice, ruſhed into the chamber; ſword in hand, almoſt at the ſame time that his wife entered, and advancing towards Henriquez with all the reſentment that his rage inſpired, "This is too much, tyrant! (cried he) don't think that I am ſo baſe as to endure the affront thou haſt done my honour."—"Traitor (replied the king, putting himſelf in a poſture of defence) don't imagine that thou art able to execute thy deſigns with impunity." With theſe words they began a combat which was too furious to laſt long, the Conſtable, fearing that Siffredi

Digitized by Google

and his ſervants, alarmed at the cries of Blanch, would ſoon come and oppoſe his vengeance, fought without caution. His rage diveſted him of all judgement; he took his meaſures ſo ill that he ran upon his adverſary's ſword, which entered his body to the hilt, and the moment he fell, the king checked his indignation.

'Leontio's daughter, touched with the condition in which ſhe ſaw her huſband, and ſurmounting the natural reluctance ſhe had for him, threw herſelf on the floor, and ſupported him with the moſt eager concern. But that unhappy ſpouſe was too much prepoſſeſſed againſt her, to be affected with theſe expreſſions of her grief and compaſſion. Death, whoſe approaches he felt, could not ſuppreſs the tranſports of his jealouſy; he ſaw nothing in his laſt moments, but the happineſs of his rival, and the idea appeared ſo horrid, that, collecting all the ſtrength he had left, he lifted the ſword which was ſtill in his hand, and plunged it in the breaſt of Blanch. "Die (ſaid he, while he ſtabbed her) die, unfaithful woman; ſince the ties of marriage have been too weak to preſerve that faith which you ſwore to me at the altar! And thou, Henriquez (added he) boaſt not of thy fate. Thou canſt not enjoy my misfortune, and therefore I die ſatisfied." Having ſpoke thus, he expired, and his countenance, covered as it was with the ſhades of death, ſtill retained ſomething fierce and terrible. That of Blanch pre-

Digitized by Google

preſented quite a different ſpectacle. The blow ſhe received was mortal; ſhe fell upon the body of her dying ſpouſe, and the blood of this innocent victim was mixed with that of her murtherer, who had executed his cruel reſolution ſo ſuddenly, that the king had not time to prevent its effects.

The unfortunate prince ſeeing Blanch fall, uttered a loud cry, and more confounded than ſhe with the blow that robbed her of life, haſtened to give her the ſame ſuccour that ſhe had offered to the conſtable. But ſhe ſaid, with a faltering voice, "Sir, you may ſpare youſelf the trouble. I am the victim which unpitying fate demands: may it appeaſe the wrath of heaven, and ſecure the happineſs of your reign!" As ſhe pronounced theſe words, Leontio, brought thither by her cries, entered the chamber, aud ſtruck with the objects that preſented themſelves to his eyes, became motionleſs where he ſtood; while Blanch, without perceiving him, continuing to ſpeak to the king, ſaid, "Adieu, prince, cheriſh my memory. My love and misfortunes claim that favour. Entertain no reſentment againſt my father. Comfort his age and ſorrow, and do juſtice to his zeal. Above all, make my innocence known. This is what I recommend to you more than any thing. Adieu, my dear Henriquez—I die—receive my laſt breath."

So ſaying, ſhe expired; and the king having kept a melancholy ſilence for ſome time,

Digitized by Google

ſaid to Siffredi, who was overwhelmed with woe, "Behold, Leontio, contemplate your own work, and, in this tragical event, conſider the fruit of your officious care and zeal for me!" The old man was ſo penetrated with ſorrow that he made no reply—but why ſhould I pretend to deſcribe thoſe things which no language can expreſs? Let it ſuffice to ſay, that both uttered the moſt moving complaints, as ſoon as the greatneſs of their affliction allowed them the uſe of ſpeech. The king all his life preſerved the moſt tender remembrance of his miſtreſs, and could never be prevailed upon to marry Conſtantia, who being joined by the Infant Don Pedro, they ſpared nothing to avail themſelves of Roger's laſt will: but they were at laſt obliged to yield to prince Henriquez, who ſubdued all his enemies. As for Siffredi, the grief he felt for having been the cauſe of ſo many misfortunes, detached him from the world, and rendered his native country inſupportable to him: he, therefore, abandoned Sicily, and croſſing over into Spain, with Portia, the only child he had left, purchaſed this caſtle, where he lived near fifteen years after Blanch's death, and had the comfort, before he died, of ſeeing Portia ſettled: ſhe married Don Jerome de Silva, and I am the only fruit of that marriage. This (added the widow of Don Pedro de Pinares) is the hiſtory of my family, and a faithful account of the misfortunes repreſented in that picture, which my grandfather, Leontio, ordered to be

Digitized by Google

be drawn as a monument of the fatal adventure to his poſterity.

CHAP. V.

The behaviour of Aurora de Guſman at Salamanca.

ORTIZ, her companions, and I, having heard this relation, withdrew, and left Aurora and Elvira in the hall, where they ſpent the reſt of the day in converſation, Far from being tired with one another, next day, when we ſet out, they were as much affected at parting as two friends who have long lived agreeably together.

At laſt we arrived (without meeting any bad accident) at Salamanca*, where we immediately took a houſe ready furniſhed, and Dame Ortiz, as we had concerted it, aſſumed the name of Donna Kimena de Guſman. She had been too long a duenna not to be a good actreſs; accordingly, going out one morning with Aurora, a waiting maid, and valet, ſhe repaired to a houſe where lodgings were let, and where we underſtood Pacheco uſually lived. Having aſked if they had an apartment to lett, they anſwered in the affirmative, and ſhowed her into one pretty handſomely furniſhed, which ſhe hired immediately, giving earneſt to the landlady, and telling her, that it

* Salamanca is one of the largeſt cities in Spain, ſituated on the banks of the river Tormes in the kingdom of Leon, and famous for its univerſity.

Digitized by Google

it was deſigned for one of her nephews who was coming from Toledo, to ſtudy at Salamanca, and would arrive that very day.

The duenna and my miſtreſs having ſecured this lodging, went home again, and the fair Aurora, without loſing time, transformed herſelf into a cavalier; covering her black hair with a light-coloured tour, painting her eyebrows of the ſame complexion, and adjuſting herſelf in ſuch a manner as that ſhe might very well paſs for a young nobleman. Her carriage was free and eaſy, and excepting her face, which was a little too handſome for a man, nothing could poſſibly betray her diſguiſe: her maid, who was to ſerve in quality of page, took the dreſs alſo, and we were under no apprehenſion of her ill acting, for ſhe had a good modeſt aſſurance in her air, which was very well adapted for the part ſhe was to play. In the afternoon, theſe two actreſſes being in a condition to appear on the ſtage, (that is, in the lodging which had been taken,) I accompanied them thither in a coach, with all the baggage we ſhould have occaſion for.

The landlady, whoſe name was Bernarda Ramirez, received us with great civility, and conducted us to our apartment, where we began to enter into converſation, and agreed with her for our board by the month. Then aſking if ſhe had a good many boarders, ſhe replied, "I have none at preſent. I might have abundance, if I would take all ſorts of people; but I receive none but young noblemen; and I expect

Digitized by Google

pect one this evening, who comes from Madrid to finish his studies. His name is Don Lewis de Pacheco; perhaps you may have heard of him."—"No (said Aurora) I know nothing of him, and you will oblige me by letting me know what sort of a man he is, since I am to lodge in the same house with him."—"Sir (answered the landlady, looking at the false cavalier) he is quite a fine figure, and pretty much of you own make. Ah! how happy you will be in one another! By St. Jago, I may boast of having at my house two of the most handsome noblemen in Spain."—"This Don Lewis (replied my mistress) has doubtless a thousand love-intrigues in Salamanca?"—"Yes, I'll assure you (said the old woman) he is a brisk gallant, upon my word. He has no more to do, but show himself and conquer; and among others, he has quite captivated a lady of youth and beauty, whose name is Isabella, an old lawyer's daughter, who is fond of him to distraction."—"And tell me, good mother (cried Aurora, interrupting her with precipitation) is he as much in love with her?"—"He was, (replied Bernarda Ramirez) before his departure for Madrid; but I do not know if he retains his passion for her still; for in these points he is not much to be depended upon; but skips from woman to woman, as all young gentleman usually do."

The good widow had scarce done speaking, when hearing a noise in the court-yard, we looked

Digitized by Google

looked through the window, and perceived two men alighting from their horſes: theſe where no other than Don Lewis de Pacheco himſelf, juſt arrived from Madrid, with his valet de chambre. Upon which the old woman left us, in order to receive him, and my miſtreſs prepared herſelf (not without emotion) to play the part of Don Felix. Don Lewis in a ſhort time entered our apartment in his boots, and ſaluted Aurora, ſaying, "Underſtanding that a young nobleman of Toledo is a lodger here, I beg leave to expreſs my joy in having him for a companion." While my miſtreſs returned this compliment, Pacheco ſeemed ſurpriſed to ſee ſuch an amiable cavalier; and could not help telling her, that he had never before beheld any man ſo handſome and genteelly made. A great many civilities paſſed on both ſides, after which Don Lewis retired to the apartment allotted for him.

While he was ſhifting and dreſſing, a ſort of page, who wanted to deliver a letter to him, meeting Aurora on the ſtair-caſe by accident, miſtook her for Don Lewis, and giving her the billet, ſaid, "Signor cavalier, though I have never before ſeen Signor Pacheco, I believe I need not aſk if you are he, being perſuaded that I am not miſtaken."—"No, friend, (replied my miſtreſs, with admirable preſence of mind) you are aſſuredly not miſtaken, and you acquit yourſelf of your commiſſion ſurpriſingly well. I am Don Lewis de Pacheco; you may

Digitized by Google

may return! and I will take care to ſend an anſwer very ſoon. The page diſappearing, Aurora ſhut herſelf up with her maid and me, and opening the letter, read theſe words.—

" WITH what joy did I receive the
" news of your arrival at Salamanca!
" My tranſport had well nigh got the better
" of my reaſon!—But is Iſabella ſtill dear to
" you? make haſte, and aſſure her in perſon
" of your conſtancy: though ſhe will ſcarce
" be able to ſupport the pleaſure of finding
" you unchanged!"

" This billet (ſaid Aurora) proclaims the violence of the author's paſſion; and the lady is a rival not to be contemned. I muſt ſpare nothing to detach Don Lewis from her, and even to hinder him from ſeeing her: the undertaking, I own, is difficult; but nevertheleſs, I don't deſpair of ſucceſs." Accordingly my miſtreſs having muſed a minute or two, added, " I'll engage there ſhall be a breach between them in leſs than four-and-twenty hours." Pacheco having taken a little repoſe in his own apartment, returned to our's, and renewed his converſation with Aurora, before ſupper. " Signor cavalier (ſaid he to her, with an air of pleaſantry) I believe the huſbands and lovers will have no cauſe to rejoice at your arrival at Salamanca; but rather have reaſon to be uneaſy: as for my own part, I tremble for my conqueſts."—" Hark'e (anſwered

Digitized by Google

ſwered my miſtreſs, in the ſame tone) your fear is not ill grounded; Don Felix de Mendoza is a formidable man, I aſſure you. I have been in this country before, and know that the women here are not inſenſible: about a month ago, in my way through this city, I ſtopped here eight days, and I will tell you in confidence, that I inflamed an old lawyer's daughter."

I perceived Don Lewis diſordered at theſe words. "May one, without being thought impertinent (ſaid he) aſk the lady's name?" "How! without being thought impertinent! (cried the pretended Don Felix) why ſhould I make a myſtery of it to you? Do you think me more reſerved than other noblemen of my age? you muſt not do me ſuch injuſtice. Beſides, between you and me, the object does not deſerve ſuch delicacy. She's only a pitiful citizen; and a man of quality, you know, is never ſeriouſly engroſſed by ſuch abigails; but thinks he does them an honour in debauching them. I will, therefore, without ceremony, acquaint you with the name of the lawyer's daughter, which is, Iſabella"—"And the lawyer (cried Pacheco, interrupting her with impatience) is not he called Signor Murcia de la Llanna?"—"The very ſame (replied my miſtreſs) here is a letter which I received from her juſt now. You may read it, and ſee whether or not the lady has a kindneſs for me." Don Lewis caſting his eyes over the billet, knew the hand, and was ſtruck dumb with

Digitized by Google

with confuſion. "What is the matter? (added Aurora, with an air of aſtoniſhment) you change colour! I believe (God forgive me!) that you have ſome concern in this lady. Ah! how vexed am I for having ſpoke of her ſo freely!"

"I think myſelf obliged to you for your information (ſaid Don Lewis, in a tranſport of anger and diſdain) Perfidious, fickle creature! Don Felix, I am bound to you for ever. You have extricated me out of an error, in which I might have remained a long time. I thought myſelf beloved. Beloved, did I ſay? I believed myſelf adored by that Iſabella. I had, indeed, ſome regard for the creature; but now I ſee ſhe is a coquet who deſerves nothing but contempt."—"I applaud your reſentment (ſaid Aurora, feigning indignation in her turn) a lawyer's daughter ought to think herſelf very happy in having ſuch an accompliſhed nobleman as you for her lover. Her inconſtancy is inexcuſable; and far from accepting the ſacrifice ſhe makes of you, I intend to puniſh her by ſlighting her favours." "For my part (replied Pacheco) the only vengeance that I ſhall take, is never to ſee her again."—"You are in the right (cried the falſe Mendoza;) nevertheleſs, that ſhe may know how much we both deſpiſe her, I think each of us ſhould write to her an inſulting letter, which I will encloſe in one paper, and ſend as anſwer to this her billet. But, before we proceed to this extremity, conſult your heart.

Perhaps,

Digitized by Google

Perhaps you will, one day, repent of having broke with Iſabella."—"No, no! (ſaid Don Lewis) I ſhall never be ſo weak; and in the mean time conſent to mortify the ungrateful creature, as you have propoſed."

I was accordingly ſent for paper, pen, and ink, and both of them ſet about compoſing very obliging letters for the daughter of Doctor Murcia la Lianna. Pacheco, in particular, could not find terms ſtrong enough to expreſs his ſentiments, and tore five or ſix half-finiſhed billets, becauſe he thought they were not ſufficiently ſevere. One, however, he was ſatisfied with at laſt; and no doubt he had reaſon ſo to be; for it contained theſe words: "Learn to know yourſelf, my princeſs, and be no longer ſo vain as to believe that I love you. If I am captivated, it muſt be with other kind of merit than your's, which is ſcarce ſufficient to amuſe me for a few moments; and only calculated for diverting the meaneſt ſcholars of the univerſity."—This courteous letter being written, and Aurora having finiſhed her's, which was not a whit milder; ſhe ſealed them both, and encloſing them together, gave me the packet, ſaying, "There, Gil Blas, be ſure to deliver this to Iſabella this evening.—You underſtand me?" (added ſhe, tipping me the wink, the meaning of which I could eaſily comprehend.) "Yes, Sir (anſwered I) the thing ſhall be done to your wiſh."

At

Digitized by Google

At the ſame time, I went out, and being in the ſtreet, ſaid to myſelf, "Oho! Gil Blas, then it ſeems you play the valet in this farce. Well friend, ſhow that you have wit enough to perform ſuch a fine part. Signor Don Felix (as you ſee) depends ſo much on your underſtanding, that he contents himſelf with giving you a ſign only. Is he to blame for that? No. I conceive his meaning: he deſires that I ſhould deliver this billet of Don Lewis only. That is the interpretation of the ſign, than which nothing could be more intelligible." I did not heſitate in opening the packet, from which I took Pacheco's letter, and carried it to the houſe of Doctor Murcia, having ſoon informed myſelf whereabouts he lived. Finding the little page who had been at our lodgings, at the door; "Brother (ſaid I) don't you ſerve the daughter of Mr. Doctor Murcia?" When he anſwered in the affirmative, "You have ſuch an obliging phyſiognomy (I replied) that I take the liberty to deſire you will deliver a love-letter to your miſtreſs."

The page aſked from whom I brought it; and I no ſooner told him that it came from Don Lewis de Pacheco, than he ſaid, "Since it is ſo, follow me; I have orders to bring you in. Iſabella wants to talk with you." I allowed myſelf, therefore, to be introduced into a cloſet, where I did not ſtay long before the lady appeared; and I was ſtruck with the beauty of her face, having never beheld more delicate

Digitized by Google

delicate features. Her air was affected and childiſh; but for all that, ſhe had walked without leading ſtrings for thirty good years at leaſt. "Friend (ſaid ſhe to me, with a ſmiling air) do you belong to Don Lewis de Pacheco?" I anſwered that I had been his valet de chambre this three weeks; and then delivered the fatal letter, which ſhe read over twice or thrice, and ſeemed to diſtruſt the evidence of her own ſenſes. It is very certain, ſhe expected nothing leſs than ſuch an anſwer. She lifted up her eyes towards heaven, bit her lips, and for ſome time diſcovered, by her countenance, the pangs which her heart endured. Then all of a ſudden, addreſſing herſelf to me, "Friend (ſaid ſhe) is Don Lewis run mad?" Tell me, if you know, why he writes to me in this gallant ſtile. What dæmon poſſeſſes him? If he had a mind to break with me, could he not have done it without affronting me with ſuch abuſive letters?"

"Madam (ſaid I) my maſter is certainly to blame; but he was in ſome meaſure forced to it. If you will promiſe to keep the ſecret, I will diſcover the whole myſtery."—"I do promiſe; (ſaid ſhe, interrupting me with precipitation) don't be afraid of my expoſing you, but freely explain yourſelf."—"Well, then (I reſumed) this is, briefly, the affair. Immediately after he had received your letter, a lady, covered with a very thick veil, came to our lodging, and aſking for Signor Pacheco, ſpoke with him in private a good while;

Digitized by Google

while; and towards the close of the conversation, I overheard her say to him, "You swear to me that you will never see her again: but that is not all—You must also, for my satisfaction, this instant write to her a billet which I will dictate, and this I exact of you." Don Lewis did as she desired, then putting the letter into my hand, "Enquire (said he) where Doctor Murcia de Lianna lives, and convey, with address, this paper to his daughter Isabella."

So that you see, Madam (added I) this disobliging letter is the work of a rival, and consequently, my master is not so much to blame. "O heaven! (cried she) he is more so than I imagined! His infidelity injures me more than the spiteful words which his hand wrote. Ah! the perfidious wretch! he has entered into other engagements.—But (added she, assuming a lofty air) let him abandon himself to his new flame without constraint, I don't intend to thwart him. Tell him, that he had no occasion to insult me, in order to make me leave the field free to my rival; and that I despise such a fickle lover too much, to have the least desire of recalling him." So saying, she dismissed me, and retired very much irritated against Don Lewis; while I went away very well satisfied with myself, and persuaded that if I should set up for a genius, I should soon become a most dextrous cheat.—I returned to our lodgings, where I found Mendoza and Pacheco at supper, conversing together

Digitized by Google

gether, as if they had been old acquaintances. Aurora, perceiving by my chearful countenance, that I had not acquitted myſelf ill of my commiſſion; "So, thou art returned, Gil Blas (ſaid ſhe;) give us an account of thy meſſage." Being obliged to truſt to my own fineſſe again, I told them that I had delivered the packet with my own hand; and that Iſabella, after having read the two billet-doux which it contained, inſtead of ſeeming diſconcerted, fell a laughing like one who had loſt her ſenſes; ſaying, "Upon my conſcience, young noblemen have an excellent ſtyle! It muſt be owned, that other people don't write half ſo agreeably."—"A fine way of diſembarraſſing herſelf! (cried my miſtreſs) ſhe muſt certainly be a finiſhed coquet."—"As for me (ſaid Don Lewis) I ſhould never know Iſabella by ſuch behaviour: ſhe muſt have entirely changed her character during my abſence."—"I could not have thought her ſuch a perſon, indeed (replied Aurora,) but we muſt allow that there are women who can aſſume a great many different ſhapes: I was once in love with one of theſe, who made me her dupe a long time: Gil Blas you can tell that ſhe had an air of virtue, which might have deceived the whole world."—"Yes, truly (ſaid I, mingling in the converſation) ſhe had a look that would have decoyed the moſt wary. I, myſelf, might have been trepanned by it."

The

Digitized by Google

The pretended Mendoza and Pacheco burſt into a loud laugh, on hearing me talk thus: one, becauſe I bore witneſs againſt an imaginary lady; and the other, on account of the expreſſion I had uſed. We continued diſcourſing of women who have the art of diſſembling, and the reſult of our converſation was, that Iſabella was accuſed in due form, and convicted of being an arrant jilt.

Don Lewis proteſted anew, that he would never ſee her, and Don Felix, by his example, ſwore he would always have the moſt perfect contempt for her. After theſe proteſtations, they profeſſed a mutual friendſhip, and promiſed to conceal nothing from one another. Supper being over, they proceeded to compliments; and, at laſt, parted to go to bed, each in his own apartment. I followed Aurora to her's, where I gave an exact account of the converſation I had with the doctor's daughter, not forgetting the leaſt circumſtance. I thought ſhe would have embraced me in the tranſport of her joy. "Dear Gil Blas (ſaid ſhe) I am charmed with thy underſtanding! When one is ſo unfortunate as to be engaged in a paſſion which compels us to have recourſe to ſtratagems, it is a great advantage to have in our intereſts ſuch a ſenſible young fellow as thee. Courage, my friend; we have removed a rival who might have given us a world of trouble. This is no bad prognoſtick: but as lovers are ſubject to ſtrange relapſes, I think we muſt make a

Digitized by Google

ſtrong puſh, and bring Aurora de Guzman on the ſtage to-morrow." I approved of the ſcheme, and, leaving Signor Don Felix with his page, retired to bed.

CHAP. VI.

The ſtratagems practiſed by Aurora, to captivate Don Lewis de Pacheco.

THE two new friends meeting next morning, began the day with embraces, which Aurora was obliged to give and receive in order to act the part of Don Felix. They went out to walk, and I accompanied them with Chilindron, the valet of Don Lewis; when ſtopping at the univerſity, to look at the titles of books that were paſted on the gate, which a good many people amuſed themſelves in reading, I perceived a little man among them, who gave his opinion of all the different works that were ſo publiſhed. I obſerved that he was heard with great attention, which I fancied at the ſame time he believed was no more than his due: for he ſeemed vain and poſitive, as little men commonly are. "That new tranſlation of Horace (ſaid he) which you ſee advertiſed in ſuch large characters, is a work in proſe, compoſed by an old college-author—a book in great eſteem among the ſtudents, who have already conſumed four editions of it: and yet there is not one man of taſte who has purchaſed ſo much as a ſingle copy." His judgement was not

Digitized by Google

not a whit more favourable for the other books, which he ridiculed without exception; ſo that, in all likelihood, he was an author himſelf. I ſhould not have been tired of hearing him to an end, but was obliged to follow Don Lewis and Don Felix, who, being as little pleaſed with his diſcourſe, as intereſted in the books which he cenſured, left him to the enjoyment of his own criticiſm.

We came home at dinner-time, and my miſtreſs, ſitting down at table with Pacheco, artfully turned the converſation on her own family. "My father (ſaid ſhe) is a cadet of the houſe of Mendoza, and ſettled at Toledo; my mother is ſiſter to Donna Kimena de Guſman, who came to Salamanca ſome days ago, on an affair of importance, with her niece Aurora, the only daughter of Don Vincent de Guſman, who, perhaps, you know." "No (replied Don Lewis) but I have often heard of him, as well as of your couſin Aurora. Am I to believe what is reported of her? I am aſſured that nothing equals her underſtanding but her beauty."—"As for underſtanding (reſumed Don Felix) ſhe has a pretty good ſhare, and that well cultivated: but I don't think her ſo very handſome. People ſay that ſhe and I very much reſemble one another."—"If that be the caſe (cried Pacheco) ſhe deſerves the reputation ſhe has got: your features are regular; your couſin muſt be quite enchanting. I wiſh I had an opportunity of ſeeing and converſing with

Digitized by Google

her."—"I undertake to ſatisfy your curioſity (replied the pretended Mendoza) and will carry you to my aunt's houſe this very afternoon." My miſtreſs, all of a ſudden, changed the diſcourſe, and talked on indifferent ſubjects. After dinner, while they were preparing to go and viſit Donna Kimena, I was beforehand with them, and ran to advertiſe the duenna, that ſhe might be ready to receive them; then, returning inſtantly, accompanied Don Felix, who conducted Don Lewis to the houſe of his aunt. But they had ſcarce entered the houſe, when they met Dame Kimena, who deſired them by a ſign, to make no noiſe. "Huſh! huſh! (ſaid ſhe, with a low voice) you will wake my niece, who has been tormented ſince yeſterday with a terrible headach, which has juſt left her, and the poor child has been aſleep about a quarter of an hour."—"I am ſorry for this diſappointment (ſaid Mendoza; I was in good hopes of ſeeing my couſin, and had promiſed that pleaſure to my friend Pacheco."—"The affair is not very urgent (replied Ortiz, ſmiling) you may defer it till to-morrow." The cavaliers converſed a little while with the old gentlewoman, and then retired.

Don Lewis carried us to the houſe of one of his friends, a gentleman whoſe name was Don Gabriel de Pedros, with whom we ſpent the reſt of the day, ſupped, and did not think of coming home till two o'clock in the morning. We had got about half way, when we ſtum-

Digitized by Google

ſtumbled over two men lying ſtretched upon the ground. Thinking they were unfortunate people who had been aſſaſſinated, we ſtopped to give them aſſiſtance, provided it was not too late; and as we endeavoured to inform ourſelves of their condition, as well as the darkneſs of the night would allow, the patrole came up, and the commander, taking us at firſt for the murtherers, ordered his men to ſurround us; but he conceived a more favourable opinion of our morals, when he heard us ſpeak, and, by the help of a dark lantern, ſaw the faces of Mendoza and Pacheco. His ſoldiers being ordered to examine the condition of the two men, who we fancied had been ſlain, found that it was a fat licentiate and his man, both in liquor, or rather deep drunk. "Gentlemen (cried one of the guard) I know this epicure; it is Signor the licentiate Guyomar, rector of our univerſity: notwithſtanding the pickle you ſee him in now, he is a great man, a wonderful genius! There is not a philoſopher in Salamanca whom he cannot confute in an argument. He has an unparelleled flow of words: 'tis pity that he is a little addicted to law-ſuits, the bottle, and a wench. He was, no doubt, on his return from ſupping with his Iſabella, where unluckly his man getting as drunk as himſelf, they have both tumbled into the kennel. Before the good licentiate was rector, this misfortune frequently happened to him; and, you ſee, honors don't always change the

Digitized by Google

man." We left thoſe drunkards in the hands of the patrole, who undertook to carry them home, and, returning to our lodging, every one went to reſt.

Don Felix and Don Lewis getting up about noon, Aurora was the firſt ſubject of their diſcourſe.—"Gil Blas (ſaid my miſtreſs to me) go to my aunt, Donna Kimena, and aſk if Signor Pacheco and I can have the pleaſure of ſeeing my couſin to-day." I went out to acquit myſelf of this commiſſion, or rather, to concert with the duenna what was to be done: and when we had taken our meaſures, I returned to the falſe Mendoza, ſaying, "Signor, your couſin Aurora is ſurpriſingly well, and charged me to aſſure you from her, that your viſit will be very agreeable; and Donna Kimena bid me aſſure Signor Pacheco that he ſhall always be welcome at her houſe, on your account."

I perceived that Don Lewis was mightily pleaſed with theſe laſt words: my miſtreſs obſerved the ſame, and drew a happy preſage from her remark. Immediately before dinner, Signora Kimena's valet appeared, and ſaid to Don Felix, "Signor, a man from Toledo has been enquiring for you at your aunt's houſe, and left this note." The pretended Mendoza opened it, and read aloud theſe words: "If you are deſirous of hearing "news of your father, and of being made "acquainted with other things of conſequence "to you, fail not, on receipt of this, to re-

"pair

Digitized by Google

"pair to the Black-Horſe, near the univer-
"ſity."—"I am (ſaid he) too curious to hear theſe things of conſequence, not to ſatisfy my deſire inſtantly. Without taking leave of you, Pacheco (added he) if I don't return in two hours, you may go by yourſelf to my aunt's, and I will come to you there, after dinner. You know what Gil Blas has told you from Donna Kimena, and you have a right to make the viſit." So ſaying, he went out, and ordered me to follow him.

You may eaſily gueſs, that, inſtead of going to the Black-Horſe, we took the road to the houſe where Ortiz lived, where, as ſoon as we arrived, Aurora took off her fair-coloured tour, waſhed and rubbed her eye-brows, dreſſed herſelf like a woman, and became a very handſome black-eyed lady, as ſhe naturally was: for her diſguiſe had changed her ſo much, that Aurora and Don Felix appeared to be two different people. She even ſeemed a great deal taller, as a woman, than as a man, to which, indeed, her ſhoe-heels, that were exceſſively high, contributed not a little. When ſhe had improved her charms with all the aſſiſtance that art could beſtow, ſhe expected Don Lewis with an agitation compoſed of hope and fear. Sometimes ſhe confided in her beauty and wit, and ſometimes was afraid that her attempt would be unſucceſsful. Ortiz, on the other ſide, ſummoned all her fineſſe to ſecond my miſtreſs; and I, that Pacheco might not ſee me in the houſe, like thoſe players

Digitized by Google

who appear on in the laſt act, concealed myſelf till towards the end of the viſit, by going out as ſoon as I had dined.

In ſhort, every thing was in order when Don Lewis arrived. He was received in a very agreeable manner by lady Kimena, and enjoyed a converſation with Aurora two or three hours long; at the end of which I came into the room where they were, and addreſſing myſelf to the cavalier, "Signor (ſaid I) my maſter, Don Felix, cannot be here to-day; but begs you will excuſe him, becauſe he is in company with three men from Toledo, of whom he cannot diſengage himſelf."—"Ah, the little rake! (cried Donna Kimena) he is certainly ſet in to hard drinking."—"No! madam (I replied) they are diſcourſing together of very ſerious affairs. He is heartily ſorry that he cannot wait upon you, and ordered me to make his apology to you and Donna Aurora."—"Oh! I'll have none of his apologies (ſaid my miſtreſs;) he knows I have been indiſpoſed, and ought to ſhow a little more concern for his relation. In order to puniſh him for his indifference, he ſhan't ſee me theſe fifteen days."—"Ah, madam! (ſaid Don Lewis) do not form ſuch a cruel reſolution: Don Felix is rather to be pitied for not being able to viſit you."

They diverted themſelves for ſome time with this ſubject, and then Pacheco withdrew. The fair Aurora immediately transformed herſelf and reſuming the appearance of a cavalier,

Digitized by Google

lier, returned to the lodgings as ſoon as ſhe could. "I aſk pardon, my dear friend (ſaid ſhe to Don Lewis) for failing to meet you at my aunt's, but I could not get rid of the people in whoſe company I was: what conſoles me for the diſappointment is, that you have at leaſt had leiſure to ſatisfy your curioſity. Well, what do you think of my couſin?" "I am enchanted by her! (anſwered Pacheco) you had reaſon to ſay ſhe reſembled you. I never ſaw features more alike: the ſame turn of face, the ſame eyes, the ſame mouth, and tone of voice! there is, however, ſome difference between you. Aurora is a little taller than you: ſhe is black, and you are fair. You are merry, and ſhe is grave. Theſe are what diſtinguiſh you the one from the other. As for underſtanding (added he) I do not believe a celeſtial being can have more than your couſin. In a word, ſhe is a lady of accompliſhed merit."

Signor Pacheco pronounced theſe laſt words with ſo much vivacity, that Don Felix ſaid, ſmiling, "Friend, I adviſe you for the ſake of your repoſe, to go no more to Donna Kimena's. Aurora de Guſman may make your heart ach, and inſpire you with a paſſion." "There is no occaſion for another ſight of her to make me in love (ſaid he, interrupting him) that is done already."—"I am ſorry for it (replied the pretended Mendoza) for you are not one of thoſe who can attach themſelves to one, and my couſin is no Iſabella.

Digitized by Google

I can assure you before-hand, that she will never listen to a lover, except on honourable terms."—"Honourable terms! (replied Don Lewis) sure nobody would offer any other to a young lady of her birth. Alas! I should think myself the happiest of men, if she would approve of my addresses, and consent to join her destiny with mine."

"Since you talk in that stile (said Don Felix) I am interested in your behalf. Yes, I list myself in your service—offer you all my influence with Aurora, and will to-morrow bring over my aunt, who has a great sway over her." Pacheco returned a thousand thanks to the cavalier who made him such fair promises; and we perceived, with joy, that our stratagem could not succeed better. Next day, we increased the love of Don Lewis, by a new invention. My mistress having been with Donna Kimena on pretence to render her favourable to that cavalier, came back and said to him, "I have spoke to my aunt, whom with much difficulty I have made your friend. She was furiously prejudiced against you: for somebody or other had made her believe that you was a downright libertine: but I undertook your defence with eagerness, and at last destroyed the bad impression she had received of your morals."

"This is not all (pursued Aurora) you must talk with my aunt, in my presence, and then we shall make sure of her assistance." Pacheco expressed extreme impatience to discourse

Digitized by Google

courſe with Donna Kimena, and that ſatisfaction was granted to him next morning, when the falſe Mendoza conducted him to Madam Ortiz, and they three had a long converſation, in which Don Lewis ſhowed that he had allowed himſelf to be very much captivated, in a very little time. The artful Kimena feigned to be moved with all the tenderneſs he expreſſed, and promiſed her utmoſt endeavours to engage her niece to marry him. Pacheco immediately threw himſelf at the feet of ſuch a kind aunt, and thanked her for her friendſhip: whereupon Don Felix aſked if his couſin was up? "No (anſwered the duenna) ſhe is ſtill a-bed, and you cannot ſee her at preſent, but return this afternoon and you may converſe with her at leiſure."—This anſwer of Madam Kimena redoubled (as you may well believe) the joy of Don Lewis, who thought the reſt of the forenoon extremely tedious, and went back to his lodgings with Mendoza, who was not a little pleaſed with obſerving in him all the marks of genuine love.

They talked of nothing but Aurora, and when they had dined, Don Felix ſaid to Pacheco, "There's a thought come into my head. I am of opinion, that I ſhould go to my aunt's ſome minutes before you, and have a little chat with my couſin, that I may, if poſſible, diſcover the diſpoſition of her heart towards you." Don Lewis, approving this ſcheme, let his friend go before, and did not ſet out till an hour after. So, my miſtreſs

Digitized by Google

made ſuch good uſe of her time, that ſhe was dreſſed like a lady when her lover arrived. "I thought (ſaid the cavalier, after having ſaluted Aurora and the duenna) to have found Don Felix here."—"You will ſee him immediately (anſwered Donna Kimena) he is writing in my cloſet." Upon which, Pacheco ſeemed to ſwallow the trick, and entered into converſation with the ladies. But, notwithſtanding the preſence of the beloved object, he perceived that the hours ſtole away, without Mendoza's appearing; and, as he could not help teſtifying ſome ſurprize at it, Aurora, changing countenance all of a ſudden, began to laugh, and ſaid to Don Lewis, "Is it poſſible that you have no ſuſpicion of the trick which has been played upon you? Do an artificial light-coloured tour, and painted eye-brows, make me ſo unlike myſelf, that you have been miſtaken by them hitherto? Undeceive yourſelf then, Pacheco (continued ſhe, reſuming an air of gravity) and know that Don Felix de Mendoza and Aurora de Guſman are but one and the ſame perſon."

She was not contented with extricating him out of his error, but alſo owned her paſſion for him, and informed him of all the ſteps ſhe had taken towards its ſucceſs. Don Lewis, no leſs charmed than ſurprized with what he heard, threw himſelf at her feet, exclaiming in a tranſport of joy, "Ah, beautiful Aurora! may I then believe myſelf the happy mortal whom you have favoured ſo much. How

ſhall

Digitized by Google

ſhall I recompenſe your goodneſs, which the moſt perfect love can never enough repay?" Theſe words were accompanied with a thouſand more paſſionate and tender expreſſions: after which, the two lovers conferred upon the meaſures that were to be taken towards the accompliſhment of their mutual deſires; and it was reſolved that we ſhould ſet out immediately for Madrid, and bring our comedy to a concluſion by marriage. This deſign was no ſooner formed than put in execution: in fifteen days, Don Lewis eſpouſed my miſtreſs, and their nuptials gave riſe to entertainments and infinite rejoicings.

CHAP. VII.

Gil Blas quits his place, and goes into the ſervice of Don Gonzales de Pacheco.

THREE weeks after this marriage, my miſtreſs, being deſirous of recompenſing me for the ſervice I had done her, made me a preſent of an hundred piſtoles, ſaying, "Gil Blas, my friend, far from turning you away, I leave it to your choice to ſtay with me as long as you pleaſe; but my huſband's uncle, Don Gonzales de Pacheco, wants to have you for a valet-de-chambre. I ſpoke to him ſo advantageouſly of you, that he aſſured me, I would do him a favour in parting with you to him. He is an old nobleman (added ſhe) of an excellent character, and you will be quite happy in his ſervice."

I thanked

Digitized by Google

I thanked Aurora for her generoſity, and, as ſhe had no longer any occaſion for me, accepted the poſt to which I was recommended; the more willing, as I ſhould ſtill be in the family. One morning, therefore, I went with a meſſage from my new married miſtreſs, to Signor Don Gonzales, who was ſtill a-bed although it was near twelve o'clock. When I entered his chamber, I found him taking ſome broth which the page had brought in. The old gentleman's whiſkers were in papers, his eyes almoſt quite extinguiſhed, and his face pale and meagre. He was one of thoſe old boys who had been great rakes in their youth, and are not a whit more ſedate in their age. He received me with great civility, and told me, that if I would ſerve him with as much zeal as I had manifeſted for his niece, I might depend upon living happily. I promiſed to have the ſame attachment to him which I had for her, and that moment he engaged me in his ſervice.

Behold me, then, with a new maſter, and heaven knows what ſort of a man he was! When he got up, I fancied I ſaw the reſurrection of Lazarus. Paint to your own imagination, a tall body, ſo lean and whithered, that when it was naked an anatomiſt might have taught oſteology upon it, with legs ſo ſmall that they looked like ſpindles, after he had put on three or four pair of ſtockings. This living mummy was beſides troubled with an aſthma, and coughed at every word he ſpoke.

Having

Digitized by Google

Having drank chocolate, he called for paper and ink, and wrote a letter, which he ſealed and ſent away, according to the direction, by the page who had brought the broth; then turning to me, "Friend (ſaid he) thou art the perſon whom I intend henceforth to truſt with my commiſſions, eſpecially thoſe which regard Donna Euphraſia, a young lady whom I love, and who is paſſionately fond of me."

"Good God! (ſaid I to myſelf) how can young people help believing themſelves beloved, when this old dotard thinks himſelf adored!"—"Gil Blas (added he) thou ſhalt go with me this very day to her houſe, where I ſup almoſt every night, and thou wilt be charmed with her prudence and reſerve: far from reſembling thoſe ſilly coquets who can reliſh nothing but youth, and are won by appearances only, ſhe has an underſtanding already mature and judicious, that conſults the ſentiments of a man, and prefers a lover of delicacy and taſte, to one of the moſt ſhining exteriors." Signor Don Gonzales did not here finiſh the eulogium of his miſtreſs, whom he repreſented as the epitome of all perfection, But he had a hearer not eaſily perſuaded. After the conduct of the actreſſes, which I had ſeen, I did not look upon old noblemen as people very happy in their amours. I pretended, however, out of complaiſance, to believe all that my maſter ſaid. I did more, I extolled the diſcernment and taſte of Euphraſia, and was even impudent enough to affirm,

Digitized by Google

affirm, that ſhe could not have a more amiable gallant.

The good old gentleman did not perceive that I had made game of him; but, on the contrary, applauded my good ſenſe. So true it is, that a ſycophant may run any riſk with the great, who ſwallow all kinds of flattery, let it be ever ſo abſurd. The old man having written his letter pulled ſome hairs out of his beard with a pair of pincers, cleaned his eyes of a thick gum that filled them, waſhed his ears and hands, and after having performed his ablutions, painted his whiſkers, eye-brows, and hair, of a black colour; continuing longer at his toilet than an old widow who ſtudies to hide the outrages of time upon her. Juſt as he had done dreſſing, another gentleman in years, one of his friends, entered, whoſe name was the Count d'Aſumar. But he, far from concealing his grey hairs, ſupported himſelf on a cane, and ſeemed to glory in his old age, rather than in appearing young. "Signor Pacheco (ſaid he, as he came in) I am come to dine with you."—"You are very welcome Count," (anſwered my maſter.) Mean while, having embraced one another, they ſat down and entered into converſation till ſuch time as dinner was ready.

The diſcourſe turned at firſt upon a bull-feaſt, which had been celebrated a few days before; and as they mentioned the cavaliers who had ſhown the greateſt vigour and addreſs, the old Count, like another Neſtor, who,

from

Digitized by Google

from talking of the preſent, always took occaſion to praiſe the paſt, ſaid, with a ſigh, "Alas! I ſee no men now-a-day comparable to thoſe I have known heretofore; and the tournaments are not performed with half the magnificence that they were when I was a young man." I laughed within myſelf at the prejudice of honeſt Signor D'Aſumar, who did not confine it to tournaments only; but I remember, when the deſſert was ſet upon the table, ſeeing ſome fine peaches ſerved up, he obſerved, "In my time the peaches were much larger than they are at preſent; nature degenerates every day."—"At that rate (ſaid Don Gonzales, ſmiling) the peaches of Adam's time muſt have been wonderfully large."

Count D'Aſumar ſtaid almoſt the whole day with my maſter, who no ſooner found himſelf diſengaged, than he went out, bidding me follow him. He went to Euphraſia's, who lodged at the diſtance of an hundred paces from our houſe, and found her in a very handſome apartment. She was gaily dreſſed, and had ſuch a youthful air, that I concluded ſhe was under age, although ſhe was good thirty years old at leaſt. She was really handſome, and her underſtanding ſoon raiſed my admiration: for ſhe was not one of thoſe coquets, who have nothing to recommend them but idle ribaldry and loſe behaviour; ſhe was modeſt in her manners, as well as in her converſation, and talked with a great deal of wit, without the leaſt affectation. "O heaven! (ſaid I to myſelf)

Digitized by Google

myſelf) is it poſſible that a perſon of ſuch delicacy can be a lady of pleaſure!" I imagined that imprudence was inſeparable from all women of her profeſſion, and was aſtoniſhed to ſee one with the appearance of modeſty; not reflecting that theſe princeſſes know how to aſſume any ſhape, and accommodate themſelves to the characters of the people of fortune and nobility that fall into their hands. When their gallants are pleaſed with fire and tranſport, they are briſk and petulant: and, with thoſe who love reſerve, practiſe a prudent and virtuous behaviour: they are the true cameleons, who change colour according to the humour and diſpoſition of the men whom they approach.

Don Gonzales was none of thoſe noblemen who are taken with your bold beauties: he could not bear ladies of that claſs; on the contrary, he could reliſh no woman, unleſs ſhe had the appearance of a veſtal. Euphraſia, therefore, modelled herſelf accordingly, and ſhowed that all the good actreſſes are not employed in the theatre. Leaving my maſter with his nymph, I went down ſtairs into an hall, where I found an old chamber-maid, whom I had known a waiting woman to an actreſs. Recollecting me immediately, ſhe ſaid, "What is it you, Gil Blas? You have quitted Arſenia it ſeems, as I did Conſtantia."—"Yes, truly, (anſwered I) it is a long time ſince I left her, and went to ſerve a young lady of faſhion. A player's life is not to my taſte; and therefore

Digitized by Google

fore I diſmiſſed myſelf, without deigning to come to the leaſt explanation with Arſenia."—"You was in the right (replied the chamber-maid, whoſe name was Beatrice) I ſerved Conſtantia pretty much in the ſame manner: one morning early I gave in my accounts very coldly, which ſhe received without uttering one ſyllable, and ſo we parted cavalierly enough."

"I am extremely glad (ſaid I) that we now meet in a more honourable houſe: Donna Euphraſia ſeems to be a ſort of woman of faſhion, and I believe her character is very good."—"You are not at all miſtaken (ſaid the old waiting-woman) ſhe is of a very good family; and as for her temper, I can aſſure you there never was one more equal and ſweet. She is none of thoſe paſſionate and difficult miſtreſſes, who find fault with every thing, ſcold inceſſantly, torment their domeſtics, and, in one word, make a hell of their ſervice. I never once heard her grumble; but when I happen to do any thing contrary to her inclination, ſhe reproves me without rage, and never lets one of thoſe epithets eſcape her, of which your violent dames are ſo liberal."—"My maſter (I reſumed) is alſo very ſweet tempered: he is the beſt natured mortal alive; and therefore you and I are much more happy than when we were in the ſervice of actreſſes."—"A thouſand times more happy! (replied Beatrice) inſtead of leading a life of noiſe and tumult, I now live, as it were, in a retreat. No-

Digitized by Google

No man enters these doors but Signor Don Gonzales. I shall see nobody but you in my solitude, for which I am not at all sorry; for I have had an affection for you a long time, and, more than once, envied the happiness of Laura, in having you for a gallant. But, in short, I hope to be as happy as she; for, though I have neither her youth nor her beauty, by way of amends, I hate coquetry, and am as faithful as a turtle."

As honest Beatrice was one of those persons who are obliged to make a tender of their favours, because nobody will ask them, I was not at all tempted to profit by her advances: I did not desire, however, that she should perceive my contempt, and was even polite enough to express myself in such a manner as that she did not lose all hopes of engaging my heart. I imagined, then, that I had made a conquest of an old chambermaid, but happened on this occasion to be deceived: she did not behave to me in this manner for my own sake only; her design was to inspire me with love, that she might bring me over to the interest of her mistress, for whom she was so zealous, that she did not mind what it cost her, in promoting her advantage. I found my error next morning, when I carried a billet-doux from my master to Euphrasia. That lady gave me a most gracious reception, and said a thousand obliging things, in which she was joined by her maid: one admiring my physiognomy, while the other observed in me an air

Digitized by Google

air of prudence and ſagacity. According to them, Signor Don Gonzales poſſeſſed a treaſure, in having ſuch a valet. In a word, they praiſed me ſo much, that I ſuſpected their applauſe, and even diſcerned the motives of it; but I received it, in appearance, with all the ſimplicity of a fool, and by this counter-plot effectually deceived the ſharpers, who, at laſt, pulled off the maſk.

"Hark'ye, Gil Blas (ſaid Euphraſia to me) it depends upon thyſelf to make thy fortune. Let us act in concert, my friend. Don Gonzales is old, and his conſtitution ſo crazy, that the leaſt touch of a fever, aſſiſted by an able phyſician, will carry him off. Let us make the beſt of the little time he has left, and exert ourſelves ſo as that he may leave the beſt part of his eſtate to me. Thou ſhalt have a good ſhare of the booty, and thou mayeſt depend upon my promiſe as much as if I had made it before all the notaries of Madrid."—"Madam (anſwered I) you may command your humble ſervant. You have nothing to do but to preſcribe my conduct, and you ſhall be ſatisfied."—"Very well (ſhe replied) thou muſt obſerve thy maſter, and give me an account of all his proceedings: when you talk to him in private, don't fail to turn the converſation upon women, and from thence artfully take occaſion to ſpeak well of me. Ply him with Euphraſia as much as poſſible; and I again recommend it to you, to be very attentive to what paſſes in the family of the Pachecos: if you

Digitized by Google

you perceive that any relation of Don Gonzales is extremely officious about him; and aims at the ſucceſſion to his eſtate, acquaint me with it immediately: that is all I aſk, and I warrant I ſhall ſend him a-drift in a very little time; for I know the different characters of his relations, and the ridiculous lights in which they may be repreſented to him: having already prejudiced him pretty ſucceſsfully againſt all his nephews and couſins."

By theſe inſtructions, and others which Euphraſia added, I concluded, that this lady was one of thoſe who attached themſelves to generous old men. She had lately prevailed upon Don Gonzales to ſell an eſtate, the price of which ſhe had converted to her own uſe; ſhe extorted from him valuable moveables every day, and, beſides, had reaſon to hope that ſhe ſhould not be forgotten in his will. I pretended to engage willingly, to do all that ſhe deſired; and, diſſimulation apart, doubted within myſelf, on my return home, whether I ſhould contribute to impoſe on my maſter, or undertake to detach him from his miſtreſs. The laſt of theſe reſolutions ſeemed more honourable than the other, and I felt myſelf more inclined to fulfil than betray my duty: beſides, Euphraſia had made me no poſitive promiſe, and, that perhaps, was the occaſion of my fidelity remaining uncorrupted. I reſolved, therefore, to ſerve Don Gonzales with zeal, perſuading myſelf, that if I ſhould be lucky enough to divert his affection from his idol,

Digitized by Google

idol, I ſhould be better rewarded for this good action, than for all the bad ones I could commit.

That I might the more eaſily accompliſh what I propoſed, I ſhowed myſelf entirely devoted to the ſervice of Donna Euphraſia; I made her believe, that I ſpoke of her inceſſantly to my maſter: and accordingly invented fables, which ſhe took for ſterling truth. I inſinuated myſelf ſo much into her good graces, that ſhe thought me entirely in her intereſt; and ſtill the better to impoſe upon her, affected to appear in love with Beatrice, who raviſhed to ſee, at her age, a young lover at her back, did not much mind being deceived, provided ſhe was deceived agreeably. When my maſter and I where each with his own princeſs, we compoſed two very different pictures in the ſame taſte. Don Gonzales, pale and withered as I have repreſented him, when he attempted to ogle looked like a wretch in his laſt agonies; and my infanta, in proportion to the ſeeming increaſe of my paſſion, aſſumed ſtill more and more childiſh airs, and practiſed all the artifice of an old coquet, which ſhe had been learning forty years at leaſt; having been refined in the ſervice of ſome of thoſe heroines of gallantry, who can pleaſe even in their old age, and die loaded with the ſpoils of two or three generations.

I was not ſatisfied with following my maſter, every evening, to the houſe of Euphraſia, I ſometimes went thither alone, by day; but at what

Digitized by Google

what hour ſoever I went in, I never met with any man, or woman either, of a ſuſpicious appearance; nor could I diſcover the leaſt trace of infidelity; a circumſtance that ſurpriſed me not a little; for I could not imagine that ſuch a handſome lady could be exactly true to Don Gonzales: and in this, ſurely, my judgement was not too raſh; for the fair Euphraſia (as you will preſently ſee) that ſhe might wait with the more patience for my maſter's eſtate, was provided with a lover more agreeable to a woman of her age.

One morning, when I carried, as uſual, a letter to the princeſs, I perceived, while I was in her chamber, the feet of a man concealed behind the tapeſtry. I went away, without ſeeming to obſerve them; but, although I ought not to be ſurpriſed at this object, which was no buſineſs of mine, I did not fail to reſent it. "Ah, perfidious wretch! (ſaid I to myſelf, in a paſſion) ah, wicked Euphraſia! thou art not ſatisfied with impoſing upon a good old gentleman, by perſuading him that he is beloved, but thou muſt alſo crown thy perfidy, by abandoning thyſelf to another!" What a fool was I, now I think on it, to moralize in this manner! I ought rather to have laughed at the adventure, and looked upon it as a compenſation for the tireſome languid moments ſhe underwent in her commerce with my maſter: I ſhould, at leaſt, have done better in holding my tongue, than in ſeizing this occaſion of acting the conſcientious valet; but inſtead

Digitized by Google

ſtead of moderating my zeal, I entered warmly into the intereſt of Don Gonzales, to whom I made a faithful report of what I had ſeen; I even added, that Euphraſia wanted to ſeduce me; I concealed nothing of what ſhe had ſaid on that occaſion, and it was his own fault if he was not perfectly acquainted with the character of his miſtreſs. He was confounded at the information, and a ſmall emotion of wrath that appeared on his countenance ſeemed to preſage that the lady ſhould not be unfaithful to him with impunity. "Enough, Gil Blas (ſaid he) I am extremely ſenſible of thy attachment, and pleaſed with thy fidelity: I will go inſtantly to Euphraſia, load her with reproaches, and break for ever with the ungrateful creature." So ſaying, he went out accordingly, and diſpenſed with my attendance, that he might ſpare me the diſagreeable part I had to play during their eclairciſſement.

I waited for my maſter's return with a world of impatience, not doubting, that, as he had ſo much cauſe to complain of his nymph, he would come back altogether detached from her allurements. On this ſuppoſition, I applauded myſelf for what I had done; repreſented to myſelf the ſatisfaction which the natural heirs of Don Gonzales would have, when they learned that their kinſman was no longer the ſport of a paſſion ſo contrary to their intereſts: I flattered myſelf, that they would conſider me for it, and, in ſhort, that I had diſtinguiſhed myſelf from other valets, who are uſually

Digitized by Google

more apt to encourage their masters in debauchery than to reclaim them. I was in love with honour, and reflected with pleasure, that I should pass for the Corypheus of all domesticks. But this idea, agreeable as it was, vanished in a few hours; when my patron ariving, said, "Friend, I have had a very sharp conversation with Euphrasia, who affirms, that thou hast misinterpreted her, and ar't if she is to be believed, no other than an impostor, altogether devoted to my nephews, out of regard to whom, thou spares nothing to make me quarrel with her. I saw real tears trickle down her eyes, and she swore by all that was sacred, that she never made any proposal to thee, or ever sées a man: Beatrice, who seems to be a good girl, protested the same thing, in such a manner, that my anger was appeased in spite of my teeth."

"How, Sir (said I, interrupting him, in a sorrowful manner) do you doubt my sincerity? Do you distrust"—"No, child (said he, interrupting me in his turn) I do thee all manner of justice: I don't believe thee in a confederacy with my nephews. I am persuaded that thou ar't concerned for my interest only, and am obliged to thee: but appearances are deceitful. Perhaps what thou saweſt existed only in thy own imagination; and, in that case, thou mayest guess how disagreeable thy accusation must be to Euphrasia. Be it as it may, she is a person whom I cannot help loving. I must even make the sacrifice to her which

Digitized by Google

which ſhe demands, and that ſacrifice is thy diſmiſſion. I am ſorry for it, my poor Gil Blas (added he) and I aſſure thee, I conſented to it with regret; but I could not do otherwiſe. What ought to conſole thee, is, that I ſhall not ſend thee away unrecompenſed: and I intend, moreover, to ſettle thee with a lady, a friend of mine, where thou wilt live very agreeably."

I was very much mortified, to ſee my zeal thus turned againſt myſelf: I curſed Euphraſia, and deplored the weakneſs of Don Gonzales, who allowed himſelf to be led by the noſe. The good old man, being very ſenſible that, in turning me away merely to pleaſe his miſtreſs, he did not behave in the moſt manly manner, made amends for his effeminacy, and gilded the pill I was to ſwallow with a preſent of fifty ducats. Next day, carrying me to the Marchioneſs of Chaves, he told her, in my hearing, that I was a young man who poſſeſſed many good qualities; that he had a regard for me, but family reaſons not permitting him to keep me in his ſervice, he begged ſhe would admit me into her family. She received me that inſtant into the number of her domeſticks; ſo that I found myſelf tranſlated, all of a ſudden, into a new place.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. VIII.

The character of the Marchioneſs of Chaves and of thoſe people who uſually viſited her.

THE Marchioneſs of Chaves was a widow of five-and-thirty, handſome, tall, and well ſhaped, who enjoyed a yearly income of ten thouſand ducats, without the care and incumbrance of children. I never ſaw a woman of more gravity, or one who ſpoke leſs, though this did not hinder her from being looked upon as the moſt witty lady in Madrid. The great concourſe of people of quality, and men of learning, who daily frequented her houſe, contributed, perhaps more than any thing ſhe ſaid, to give her this reputation. But this I will not undertake to decide: let it ſuffice to ſay, that her name imported the idea of a ſuperior genius, and that her houſe was called, by way of excellence, the Court of Criticiſm.

There was actually ſome performance or other read here every day, ſometimes new plays, and ſometimes other pieces of poetry; but nothing except ſerious ſubjects were deemed worthy of attention, humorous pieces being deſpiſed; the beſt comedy or the moſt ingenious and witty romance, was looked upon as a feeble production, that deſerved no praiſe; whereas the leaſt ſerious work, ſuch as an ode, eclogue, or ſonnet, paſſed for the greateſt effort of human underſtanding. But it often happened

BIBLIOTHECA
Digitized by Google

happened that the public did not confirm the ſentence of the court; on the contrary, was ſometimes ſo unpolite as to hiſs thoſe pieces which had been there very much applauded.

I was chamberlain in this houſe, that is, my office conſiſted in getting every thing ready in the apartment of my lady, for the reception of company, and to ſet the chairs for the men, and the cuſhions for the women, after which I ſtationed myſelf at the chamber-door, to announce * and introduce the perſons who arrived. While I was employed in this office for the firſt time, the governor of the pages, who, by accident, was then in the antechamber with me, deſcribed them all very pleaſantly as they came in. His name was Andrew Molina, naturally dry and ſatirical, with a good ſhare of underſtanding. A biſhop being the firſt who preſented himſelf, I announced him, and when he was entered, the governor obſerved, "That prelate is a man of a very pleaſant character. Having a little credit at court, he would fain make every one believe that he has a great deal, and offers his intereſt to all the world, without ſerving any body. One day, meeting at court with a gentleman who ſaluted him, he ſtopped, loaded him with civilities, and ſqueezing his hand, ſaid, 'I am wholly devoted to your ſervice; pray, Sir, put me to the proof: I ſhall never

* The announcer is a domeſtick who ſtands in the hall on viſiting days, and pronounces aloud the names of the company as they come in: from the Latin word *annunciare*.

Digitized by Google

die ſatisfied until I have an opportunity of obliging you.' The gentleman having thanked him in a very grateful manner, they parted, and the prelate ſaid to one of his followers, 'I think I know that man; I have a confuſed idea of having ſeen him ſomewhere.'

Immediately after the biſhop, the ſon of a grandee appeared; and when I had introduced him into my lady's chamber, "That nobleman (ſaid Molina) is another original. You muſt know that he goes often to a houſe, in order to treat of ſome important affair, with the gentleman who lives in it, and comes away without remembring to ſpeak a ſyllable about the matter."—"But (added the governor, ſeeing two ladies advance) there come Donna Angela de Penafiel, and Donna Margarita de Montalvan, two ladies between whom there is not the leaſt reſemblance: Donna Margarita, who piques herſelf on being a philoſopher, will undertake the moſt profound doctors of Salamanca in a diſpute, without ſuffering their argument to get the better of her argumentation. As for Donna Angela, ſhe does not affect the virtuoſo, although her underſtanding is perfectly well cultivated: her converſation is ſenſible, her ſentiments refined, and her expreſſion delicate, noble, and natural."—"This laſt is an amiable character (ſaid I to Molina) but the other, in my opinion, is inconſiſtent with the fair ſex." "Not very conſiſtent (he replied with a ſneer) and even a great many men are rendered ridiculous

Digitized by Google

culous by ſuch a diſpoſition. Madam the Marchioneſs, our lady (continued he) is alſo a little tainted with philoſophy. What wrangling will there be here to-day! God grant that religion may not be concerned with this diſpute."

As he ſpoke theſe words, we perceived a meagre man come in, with an air of reſerve and grim countenance. My governor did not ſpare him: "This here (ſaid he) is one of your ſerious wits, who would fain paſs for great geniuſes, by the favour of a few ſentences learned from Seneca, and who are eaſily detected to be fools, if you examine them a little cloſely." The next that came in, was a well ſhaped cavalier, with a Grecian mein, that is, a very ſelf-ſufficient appearance: when I aſked who he was, Molina anſwered, "He is a dramatick poet, who has compoſed, in his time, an hundred thouſand verſes, which never brought him in four-pence: but in recompence for that, he has procured a conſiderable ſettlement by ſix lines of proſe."

I was going to inform myſelf of the nature of a fortune got ſo eaſily, when I heard a great noiſe on the ſtair-caſe, "Good! (cried the governor) there comes the licentiate Campanario, who gives notice of his approach before he appears, and, beginning to talk at the ſtreet-door, continues without intermiſſion until he goes away." Sure enough the whole houſe rang again with the voice of the thundering licentiate, who, at length, entered the

Digitized by Google

antechamber with a bachelor of his acquaintance, and did not leave off ſpeaking all the time his viſit laſted. "Signor Companario (ſaid I to Molina) ſeems to be a great genius." "Yes (replied my governor) he has ſome bright ſallies, quaint expreſſions, and a good deal of humour: but over and above his being an unconſcionable talker, he does not fail to make repetitions; and, not to over-rate his talents, I believe the agreeable and comick air with which he ſeaſons every thing he ſays, conſtitutes his chief merit; for the greateſt part of his ſtrokes would do no great honour to a collection of witticiſms."

Abundance of other people came in, of whom Molina made very humorous pictures, among which he did not forget that of the Marchioneſs. "I aſſure you (ſaid he) our patroneſs is a lady of a very even temper, in ſpite of all her philoſophy. She is not at all difficult to pleaſe, and one undergoes very few caprices in her ſervice. She is one of the moſt reaſonable women of quality I know, and is even without paſſion; ſhe has as little taſte for gallantry as for play, and loves converſation only; in ſhort, moſt ladies would think her way of life inſupportably tireſome." The governor, by this eulogium, prepoſſeſſed me in favour of my miſtreſs; nevertheleſs, ſome days after, I could not help ſuſpecting that ſhe was not ſuch an enemy to love: and I will declare on what foundation my ſuſpicion was built.

One

Digitized by Google

One morning, while she was at her toilet, a little man presented himself to me, about forty years old, of a disagreeable figure, more dirty than the author Pedro de Noya, and very much hump-backed into the bargain. When he told me he wanted to speak with the marchioness, I asked him, from whom? To which he answered with a haughty look, "From myself: tell her, I am the gentleman of whom she spoke yesterday to Donna Ann de Velasco." I introduced him into my lady's apartment, and signified his arrival; upon which she immediatly enxclaimed in a transport of joy, "Show him in." She not only gave him a favourable reception, but likewise ordered all her women out of the room: so that the little hunch-back, more happy than an honester man, remained alone with her; while the chambermaids and I made ourselves merry with this fine tête-à-tête that lasted near an hour; after which my patroness dismissed the crook-back, loaded with civilities, that showed how well she was satisfied with his conversation, which, in effect, captivated her so much, that she told me one evening, in private, "Gil Blas, when the man with the hump returns, bring him into my apartment as secretly as possible." I obeyed; and, when the little man came back next morning, conducted him by a private staircase to my lady's chamber. I performed the same office, most devoutly, two or three times, without suspecting that there could be any

Digitized by Google

gallantry in the caſe. But the malignity which is ſo natural to mankind ſoon inſpired me with ſtrange ideas, and I concluded that the inclination of the Marchioneſs was either very whimſical, or that the hunch-back acted the part of a go-between.

Prepoſſeſſed with this opinion, I often ſaid to myſelf, "If my lady is in love with a handſome man, I forgive her; but if ſhe is captivated by this baboon, truly I cannot excuſe the depravity of her taſte." How much was I miſtaken in my patroneſs! the little hunch-back dabbled in magic, and as his ſkill had been extolled to the Marchioneſs, who willingly liſtened to the deluſions of ſuch impoſtors, ſhe honoured him with theſe private converſations, in which he ſhowed her things in a glaſs, taught her to turn the ſieve, and, for money, revealed all the myſteries of the cabala. Or rather, to ſpeak truly, he was a ſharper who ſubſiſted at the expence of credulous people, and was ſaid to have ſeveral women of quality under contribution.

CHAP. IX.

The incident in conſequence of which Gil Blas quitted the Marchioneſs de Chaves; and the courſe he followed afterwards.

I HAD already lived ſix months with the Marchioneſs de Chaves, and, I confeſs, was ſatisfied with my condition; but the deſtiny I had to fulfil would not permit me to live longer

Digitized by Google



Ansell del. Skelton Sculp.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

longer in that lady's houſe, nor even in Madrid: I will therefore recount the adventure that obliged me to remove from both.

Among my lady's maids there was one called Portia, who, beſides her youth and beauty, poſſeſſed ſuch an amiable character, that I attached myſelf to her, without knowing that I muſt diſpute her heart with a rival. The ſecretary of the marchioneſs, who was a proud man, and very much addicted to jealouſy, being captivated with my princeſs, no ſooner perceived my paſſion, than (without endeavouring to find out my reception with Portia) he reſolved to fight me in ſingle combat, and for this purpoſe appointed me to meet him one morning in a private place. As he was a little man, whoſe head ſcarce reached my ſhoulders, and ſeemed at the ſame time very weak, I did not think him a very dangerous rival, but repaired with great confidence to the place appointed, in hopes of gaining an eaſy victory, and making a merit of it with Portia; but the event did not anſwer my expectation. The little ſecretary, who had been two or three years at the fencing-ſchool, diſarmed me like an infant, and holding the point of his ſword to my throat, "Prepare (ſaid he) for the mortal blow, or elſe give me thy word of honour, that thou wilt this day quit the ſervice of the Marchioneſs de Chaves, and never more think of Portia." I made him that promiſe, and kept it without reluctancy; being aſhamed to appear before the reſt of the

Digitized by Google

ſervants, after my defeat, eſpecially before the fair Helen who had been the cauſe of our duel. My ſole intention in returning to the houſe was to carry off my goods and money; which, having done, I ſet out the ſame day for Toledo, my purſe being pretty well furniſhed, and my back loaded with a bundle compoſed of my whole wearing apparel: for though I had not engaged to quit Madrid, I thought proper to leave it, at leaſt for ſome years; and formed the reſolution of making the tour of Spain, and of halting at every town. "The money I have (ſaid I to myſelf) will carry me a great way; for I don't intend to be extravagant, and when I have no more, I will betake myſelf again to ſervice. A young man of my accompliſhments will find places in abundance, whenever he pleaſes to go in queſt of them.

I longed, in particular, to ſee Toledo, whither I arrived at the end of three days, and took up my lodging in a good inn, where I paſſed for a gentleman of conſequence, by the favour of my intriguing dreſs, which I did not fail to put on, and by the foppiſh airs which I affected. It was in my own option to eſtabliſh a correſpondence with ſome handſome women who lived in the neighbourhood: but underſtanding that I muſt begin by ſpending a good deal of money upon them, I bridled my deſires, and feeling ſtill a ſtrong inclination for travelling, after having ſeen every thing that was curious in Toledo, I left it one morn-

Digitized by Google

morning by break of day, and took the road to Cuenca, with an intention to go to Arragon. On the ſecond day of my journey, I went into an inn in the road, and juſt as I ſat down to refreſh myſelf, a company of ſoldiers belonging to the holy brotherhood came in, and calling for wine, fell to drinking. While they were over their cups, I heard them deſcribe a young man whom they had orders to apprehend. "The gentleman (ſaid one of them) is not more than twenty years of age, has long black hair, a good ſhape; an acquiline noſe, and is mounted on a bay horſe."

I liſtened without ſeeming to give attention to what they ſaid, and truly I did not concern myſelf much about the matter. Leaving them in the inn, I ſet forward on my journey, and had not walked a quarter of a league, when I met a young gentleman of a good mein, mounted on a cheſtnut-coloured horſe. "Upon my faith! (ſaid I to myſelf) this is the man whom the ſoldiers are in ſearch of: he has long black hair, and an aquiline noſe. I muſt do him a good office. Sir, (ſaid I to him) give me leave to aſk, whether or not you have ſome affairs of honour on your hands?" The young gentleman, without making any reply, looked earneſtly at me, and ſeemed ſurprized at my queſtion. Upon which I aſſured him, that it was not out of curioſity that I had addreſſed him in this manner; and he was very well convinced of it, when I told him what I had overheard at the inn. "Generous

Digitized by Google

nerous ſtranger (ſaid he) I will not deny that I have reaſon to believe myſelf the perſon whom thoſe ſoldiers want to apprehend; and therefore will take another road in order to avoid them."—"It is my opinion (I replied) that we ſhould immediately ſeek ſome place where we may be ſecure, and where we may be ſheltered from that ſtorm which I ſee brewing in the air, and which will burſt very ſoon." At that inſtant we diſcovered and repaired for a tufted alley of trees, that conducted us to the foot of a mountain, where we found an hermitage.

It was a large deep grotto that time had ſcooped in the rock, to which the art of man had added a kind of front, built of pebbles and ſhell-work, and quite covered with turf: the adjacent field was ſtrewed with a thouſand ſorts of flowers which perfumed the air, and, hard by the grotto, we perceived a little opening in the rock, from whence iſſued, with an agreeable noiſe, a ſpring of water that ran winding along a meadow. At the entrance of this ſolitary habitation appeared a holy hermit, ſtooping under the weight of old age, ſupporting himſelf with a ſtaff in one hand, and holding in the other a roſary of large beads, compoſed of twenty courſes at leaſt. His head was buried in a brown woolen cap with long ears, and his beard, more white than ſnow, came down to his middle. When we approached him, "Father (ſaid I) be ſo good as to favour us with ſhelter from the impend-

ing

Digitized by Google

ing ſtorm."—"Enter, my children (replied the anchorite, after having obſerved me attentively) this hermitage is at your ſervice, and you may ſtay here as long as you pleaſe. As for your horſe (added he, pointing to the forepart of his habitation) he will be very well accomodated in that place." The gentleman who accompanied me diſpoſed of his beaſt accordingly, and then we followed the old man into the grotto, which as ſoon as we had entered, a great ſhower fell, mingled with flaſhes of lightning and dreadful claps of thunder. The hermit fell on his knees before an image of St Pacomo*, which was glued to the wall; and we followed his example. Mean while, the thunder ceaſed; and we got up; but as the rain continued, and the day was far ſpent, "My children (ſaid the old man) I would not adviſe you to proceed on your journey in ſuch weather, unleſs you have ſome preſſing affair." The young man and I replied, that we had none that hindered us from halting; and that, if we were not afraid of incommoding him, we would beg leave to paſs the night in his hermitage. "You won't incommode me in the leaſt (ſaid the hermit) but will have reaſon to complain of your lodging;

* St. Pacomo was an Ægyptian, who lived in the fourth century, and founded ſeveral monaſteries, conſiſting of between twelve and ſixteen hundred monks each: his faith is ſaid to have been ſo effectual, that he walked among ſerpents unhurt; and, when he had occaſion to croſs the Nile, was tranſported from one ſide to the other on the back of a crocodile.

Digitized by Google

lodging; for you muſt lie hard, and I have nothing to offer you but anchorite's fare."

So ſaying, the old man made us ſit down at a ſmall table, and preſenting us with a few onions, a cruſt of bread and a pitcher of water, "My ſons (ſaid he) you ſee my uſual repaſt; but to-day I will commit an exceſs out of regard to you." He then brought a little cheeſe, with two handfuls of filberds, and ſpread them upon the table. The young man, who had no great appetite, did not much honour to the feaſt; upon which, the hermit obſerved to him, "I perceive that you are accuſtomed to better tables than mine, or rather, that ſenſuality has corrupted your natural taſte. I have been in the world, as you are now: the moſt delicate viands, the moſt exquiſite ragouts, were not too good for my palate: but ſince I have lived in ſolitude, I have retrieved the former purity of my taſte, and at preſent can reliſh nothing but roots, fruits, milk; in a word, that whichcompoſed the nouriſhment of our firſt parents."

While he ſpoke in this manner, the young man ſunk into a profound reverie, which the hermit perceiving, "My ſon (ſaid he to him) you have an oppreſſion on your ſpirits; may I not know the cauſe? Unboſom yourſelf to me. It is not curioſity, but charity alone that animates my requeſt. I am of age to give advice; and perhaps your ſituation requires it." "Yes, father (replied the cavalier with a ſigh) I have, doubtleſs, occaſion for advice, and

Digitized by Google

and I will follow your's, since you are so good as to offer it. I believe, I run no risk in discovering myself to a man of your character." "No, my son (said the senior) you have nothing to fear on that score, and may safely trust me with any secret." In this confidence, the cavalier spoke as follows.

CHAP. X.

The story of Don Alphonso and the fair Seraphina.

I WILL conceal nothing from you, father, nor from the other gentleman who hears me; for, after the generosity, he showed, I should be to blame to distrust him. Listen, therefore, to my misfortunes. I was born in Madrid, and my origin is this——An officer of the German guards, called the Baron de Steinbach, going home one evening, perceived a bundle of white linen at the foot of the stair case. He took it up and carried it to his wife's apartment, where he found it to be a new born infant, wrapped in very handsome swaddling clothes, with a billet importing that it belonged to persons of quality, who would one day make themselves known; and that it had been baptized by the name of Alphonso. I am that unhappy infant, and this is all that I know of my birth and parentage: sacrificed to honour or infidelity, I know not whether my mother exposed me, in order to conceal a dishonourable flame; or seduced by a perjured

Digitized by Google

jured lover, found herſelf under the cruel neceſſity of diſowning the fruit of her womb.

Be that as it will, the Baron and the lady were touched with my ſituation; and, as they had no children of their own, determined to educate me under the name of Don Alphonſo. As I advanced in years, their attachment to me increaſed; my flattering and complaiſant behaviour attracted their careſſes every moment: in a word, I had the good fortune to make myſelf beloved; they gave me all kinds of maſters; my education became their only ſtudy; and, far from expecting impatiently, that my parents would diſcover themſelves, they ſeemed, on the contrary, to wiſh that my birth would always remain a ſecret. As ſoon as the Barron found me able to carry arms, he entered me in the ſervice, procured for me an enſign's commiſſion, ordered my ſmall equipage to be got ready; and, to animate me the more to ſeek occaſions of acquiring glory, he repreſented to me, that the career of honour was open to every body; and that in war I might obtain a name the more glorious, as I ſhould owe it to myſelf alone. At the ſame time, he revealed the ſecret of my birth, which he had hitherto concealed from my knowledge. As I paſſed for his ſon in Madrid, and effectually believed myſelf to be ſo, I own, this piece of information gave me a good deal of pain: I could not then, nor cannot now think of it without ſhame; for the more my ſentiments ſeemed to argue me of a noble origin, the

Digitized by Google

the greater my confuſion was to ſee myſelf abandoned by thoſe who gave me being.

I went to ſerve in the Low-Countries; but the peace being concluded ſoon after, and Spain rid of her enemies, though not of thoſe who envied her proſperity, I returned to Madrid, where I received freſh marks of tenderneſs from the Baron and his lady. About two months after my return, a little page came into my room one morning, and preſented to me a billet, conceived pretty nearly in theſe words; "I am neither ugly nor ill-ſhaped, and "yet you ſee me frequently at the window, "without paying homage with your eyes. "This behaviour but ill anſwers your gallant "appearance; and piques me ſo much, that "I wiſh I could inſpire you with love, to be "revenged on your indifference."

Having read this billet, I did not doubt that it was from a widow called Leonora, who lived oppoſite to our houſe, and had the reputation of being very coquetiſh. I interrogated the page, who was on the reſerve at firſt, but in conſideration of a ducat, which I ſlipped into his hand, he ſatisfied my curioſity; and even undertook to carry an anſwer, by which I informed his miſtreſs, that I acknowledged my crime, and was already ſenſible of her being more than half revenged.

I was not at all inſenſible of this kind of conqueſt; I kept the houſe all that day, and took great care to be always at the window, that I might obſerve the lady, who did not forget

Digitized by Google

forget to ſhow herſelf at her's. I made love to her in dumb ſhow, ſhe anſwered my ſignals, and next morning let me know by her page, that if I would be in the ſtreet, betwixt eleven and twelve at night, I might converſe with her at a parlour window. Though I did not find myſelf very much in love with ſuch a forward widow, I did not fail to return a very paſſionate anſwer, and to wait for night with as much impatience as if I had been violently ſmitten. In the evening I went out to walk in the Prado till the hour of aſſignation; and was no ſooner arrived at that place, than a man, mounted on a fine horſe, alighted hard by me, and accoſting me haſtily, ſaid, "Are not you the ſon of Baron Steinbach?" When I replied in the affirmative, "You are the perſon (ſaid he) who intend to converſe with Leonora at her window. Her page has ſhown me her letters and your anſwers, and I have followed you this evening, from your own houſe hither, to let you know that you have a rival whoſe pride is very much mortified in being obliged to diſpute a heart with ſuch a one as you. I believe I need ſay no more; we are now in a private place. Let us draw, therefore, unleſs, to avoid the chaſtiſement I prepare for you, you will promiſe to break off all correſpondence with Leonora. You muſt either ſacrifice to me the hopes you have conceived, or forfeit your life immediately." "You ought then (ſaid I to him) to have requeſted, not demanded that ſacrifice; I might, perhaps,

Digitized by Google

perhaps, have granted it to your intreaty, but I refuse it to your threats."

"'Tis very well (he replied, after having tied his horse to a tree) draw then: it does not become a person of my quality to stoop so low as to intreat a man of your station; most people of my rank, in the same case, would have revenged themselves in a less honourable way." I was shocked with these last words, and seeing his sword already unsheathed, drew mine also: we attacked one another with such fury, that the combat did not last long: whether he behaved with too much heat, or I had more skill, I know not, but I gave him a mortal thrust, upon which I saw him stagger and fall. Whereupon, minding my own safety only, I mounted his horse, and took the road to Toledo. I durst not return to the Baron's house, being well assured that my adventure would very much afflict him, and when I considered the danger in which I was, I thought I could not get out of Madrid too soon.

In the midst of the most melancholy reflections, I rode the remaining part of the night, and all the morning; but, towards noon, was obliged to halt in order to give my horse some rest, and avoid the heat of the day, which grew insupportable. I tarried, therefore, in a village till sun-set, after which, I continued my journey, resolving to make but one stage to Toledo. I had got two leagues beyond Illescas, when, towards midnight, I was surprised

Digitized by Google

priſed in the middle of a field, with juſt ſuch another ſtorm as fell to-day; upon which I drew near the wall of a garden that I perceived at the diſtance of a few paces, and not finding a more convenient ſhelter, ſtood with my horſe as cloſe as I could to the door of a ſummer-houſe ſituated at the end of the wall, over which there was a balcony. As I leaned againſt the door, I perceived it open, which I aſcribed to the negligence of ſervants; and alighting, leſs out of curioſity than for the ſake of being better ſcreened from the rain, which did not fail to incommode me while I remained under the balcony, I entered the ground-floor of the ſummer-houſe, with my horſe, which I led by the bridle.

I employed myſelf, during the tempeſt, in obſerving the place, and though I could diſtinguiſh nothing but by the lightening that flaſhed around, it was eaſy to perceive that the houſe could not belong to a vulgar owner. I expected ſtill that the rain would ceaſe, intending to proceed on my journey; but a great light that I obſerved at a diſtance made me change my reſolution. Leaving my horſe in the ſummer-houſe, the door of which I took care to ſecure, I advanced towards the light, perſuaded that there was ſtill ſomebody in the houſe not yet gone to bed, and reſolved to deſire a lodging for that night. Having croſſed ſeveral walks, I arrived at a ſaloon, the door of which I found open alſo: I entered it, and when I had obſerved all the magnificence

Digitized by Google

nificence of the place, by the light of a fine cryſtal branch, I no longer doubted that I was in the houſe of ſome rich nobleman. The pavement was of marble, the wainſcot very handſome, and curiouſly gilt, the cornices of admirable workmanſhip, and the ceiling painted by the moſt ſkilful maſters: but what I took particular notice of, was an infinite number of buſts of Spaniſh heroes, ſupported on pedeſtals of jaſper, all round the ſaloon. I had leiſure enough to conſider all theſe things; for though I liſtened attentively from time to time, I neither heard the leaſt noiſe, nor ſaw a living creature appear.

There being on one ſide of the ſaloon a door unbolted, I half opened it, and perceived a range of rooms, the laſt of which only was lighted, "What ſhall I do? (ſaid I to myſelf.) Shall I return, or boldly penetrate to that room?" I concluded that the moſt judicious ſtep would be to return as I came. But I could not reſiſt my curioſity, or rather the force of deſtiny, that dragged me along: I advanced from one room to another, until I arrived at that in which was the light, that is, a taper burning on a marble table, in a ſilver candleſtick gilt. I at firſt obſerved very handſome and gay ſummer furniture, but in a little time, caſting my eyes upon a bed, the curtains of which were half drawn on account of the heat, I ſaw an object that attracted my whole attention. This was a young lady, who, notwithſtanding the noiſe of the thunder,

Digitized by Google.

der, lay in a profound ſleep. I approached her ſoftly, and by the light of the taper, diſcovered a complexion and features that quite dazzled me. My heart took the alarm at the ſight! I felt my ſoul ſmitten and tranſported! but whatever emotions agitated my breaſt, the opinion which I had of her high rank hindered me from entertaining the leaſt raſh thought, and reſpect prevailed over inclination.

While I glutted myſelf with the pleaſure of contemplating her beauty, ſhe awoke; and you may gueſs what was her ſurpriſe when ſhe ſaw a man whom ſhe did not know, in her bed-chamber at midnight. She trembled when ſhe perceived me, and ſhrieked aloud; while I endeavoured to remove her fear, by kneeling before her, and ſaying, "Madam, be not afraid: I come not hither to do you the leaſt injury." I was going on, but her conſternation was ſuch that ſhe did not hear me. She called her women ſeveral times, but no-body anſwering, ſhe put on a thin night-gown which lay at the bed's feet, got up haſtily, and went into the rooms that I had croſſed, ſtill calling her maids and a younger ſiſter who lived under her care. I expected to ſee all her ſervants appear, and had reaſon to apprehend that, without being heard, I ſhould meet with very diſagreeable treatment; but luckily for me ſhe called to no purpoſe; nobody came but an old domeſtick, who could not have given her much aſſiſtance, had ſhe had any thing to fear.

Digitized by Google

fear. Nevertheleſs, growing more reſolute by his preſence, ſhe aſked, with a haughty air, who I was, and how, and for what reaſon, I had the boldneſs to enter her houſe? I then began to juſtify myſelf, and had no ſooner told her, that I found the door of the ſummer-houſe open, than ſhe exclaimed, "Juſt heaven! what do I preſage!"

So ſaying, ſhe ſeized the light, and ſearching all the rooms, one after another, could ſee neither her maids, nor her ſiſter, but even obſerved that they had carried off all their baggage. Her ſuſpicions appearing now but too plain, ſhe returned to me, and ſaid, with a great deal of emotion, "Perfidious wretch! add not diſſimulation to treachery. It was not chance that brought thee here. Thou art one of the followers of Don Fernando de Leyva, and an aſſociate in his crime: but don't think to eſcape, I have ſtill people enough to ſecure thee."—"Madam (anſwered I) do not confound me with your enemies. I know no ſuch perſon as Don Fernando de Leyva, and am even ignorant of your name and quality. I am an unfortunate man, whom an affair of honour hath obliged to leave Madrid; and I ſwear by all that is ſacred, I would not have entered your houſe, had it not been for the ſtorm that ſurpriſed me! Judge, therefore, more favourably of me, and, inſtead of believing me an accomplice in the outrage you have ſuffered, think me rather diſpoſed to revenge it." Theſe laſt words, and the tone

Digitized by Google

with which they were pronounced, appeaſed the lady, who ſeemed to look upon me no longer as her enemy: but, if her indignation vaniſhed, it was only to make room for her grief. She wept bitterly; I was melted by her tears, and no leſs afflicted than ſhe, although I did not know the cauſe of her ſorrow. I not only wept with her, but, impatient to revenge her wrongs, was ſeized with a tranſport of fury. "Madam (cried I) what injury have you received? Speak! I eſpouſe your reſentment. Shall I purſue Don Fernando, and ſtab him to the heart? Name all thoſe whom you would have ſacrificed. Command my ſervices. Whatever dangers, whatever misfortunes may be attached to your vengeance, that ſtranger, whom you thought confederate with your enemies, will tempt them all, for your ſake."

This tranſport ſurpriſed the lady, and ſtopped the courſe of her tears. "Ah, Sir! (ſaid ſhe) pardon my ſuſpicion, on account of the cruel ſituation in which I am. Theſe generous ſentiments have undeceived Seraphina, and even freed me from the ſhame of ſeeing a ſtranger witneſs to the affront put upon my family.—Yes, generous unknown! I acknowledge my error, and am far from rejecting your aſſiſtance; but I aſk not the death of Don Fernando."—"Well, Madam (I replied) what ſervices can you expect of me?"—"Sir (anſwered Seraphina) the cauſe of my complaint is this: Don Fernando de Leyva is in love with

Digitized by Google

with my ſiſter Julia, whom he ſaw by accident at Toledo, where we uſually live.—Three months ago he aſked her in marriage of the Count de Polan, my father, who refuſed his conſent, on account of an old enmity ſubſiſting between our families.—My ſiſter, not yet fifteen years of age, muſt have been weak enough to follow the advice of my women, whom Don Fernando has, doubtleſs, bribed to his intereſt! and he, informed of our being by ourſelves in this country houſe, has taken this opportunity of carrying her off.—I want therefore to know what retreat he has choſen for her, that my father and brother, who have been at Madrid theſe two months, may take their meaſures accordingly. In the name of God! (added ſhe) give yourſelf the trouble of traverſing the neighbourhood of Toledo, and of making an exact enquiry about the raviſher:—my family will be eternally indebted to you for the favour."

The lady did not conſider that the employment which ſhe preſcribed for me but ill agreed with the circumſtances of a man who could not get out of Caſtile too ſoon.—But how was it poſſible for her to make this reflection, which did not even occur to me? Charmed with the happineſs of finding myſelf neceſſary to the moſt amiable perſon in the world, I accepted the commiſſion with a tranſport of joy, and promiſed to acquit myſelf with equal diligence and zeal. In effect, I did not wait for day, in order to go and

Digitized by Google

accompliſh my purpoſe; but quitted Seraphina on the inſtant, conjuring her to pardon me for the fright I had occaſioned, and aſſuring her that ſhe ſhould hear news of me in a very little time.—I went out as I had come in: but ſo much engroſſed by the lady, that it was not difficult for me to perceive I was already captivated by her beauty: I was the more confirmed in this, by the eagerneſs I felt in ſerving her, and the amorous chimeras which my imagination produced. I fancied that Seraphina, although poſſeſſed by her ſorrow, had obſerved my growing paſſion, and beheld it, perhaps, not without ſome pleaſure: I even imagined, that if I could bring her any news of her ſiſter, and the affair ſhould turn out according to her wiſh, the whole would redound to my honour.

Don Alphonſo, interrupting the thread of his ſtory in this place, ſaid to the old hermit, "I beg pardon, father, if, too full of my paſſion, I enlarge upon circumſtances which are, doubtleſs, tedious to you."—"No, my ſon (replied the anchorite) they are far from being tedious: I am even pleaſed to know how far you are ſmitten by this young lady of whom you talk, that I may regulate my advice accordingly."

"My imagination heated with theſe flattering ideas (reſumed the young man) I ſearched two days for Julia's raviſher: but it was to no purpoſe for me to make all imaginable enquiry: I could not diſcover the leaſt traces

Digitized by Google

traces of him. Very much mortified at having reaped no fruit from my researches I returned to Seraphina, whom I expected to find in the utmost anxiety: but she was much more tranquil than I imagined, and informed me that she had been more lucky than I; that she knew what was become of her sister, having received a letter from Don Fernando himself, importing, that being privately married to Julia, he had placed her in a convent at Toledo. "I have sent his letter to my father (added Seraphina.) I hope the affair will terminate in an amicable manner, and that a solemn marriage will in a short time extinguish the hatred which has so long divided our families."

When the lady had made me acquainted with her sister's fate, she made an apology for the trouble she had given me, and the danger to which she might have imprudently exposed me, by engaging me to pursue a ravisher, without remembering that I had told her, I was obliged to fly on account of an affair of honour. She excused herself, therefore, in the most obliging terms, and, as I had need of rest, carried me into the saloon, where we sat down together. She wore a loose gown of white taffety with black stripes, and a little hat of the same stuff, with a black plume of feathers, which made me guess that she was a widow, though she appeared so young, that I did not know what to think of her condition.

Digitized by Google

If I longed for an explanation on this head, ſhe was no leſs deſirous of knowing who I was; and accordingly begged that I would tell her my name, not doubting (as ſhe ſaid) that, by my noble air, and ſtill more, the generous pity that made me enter ſo warmly into her intereſts, I belonged to ſome conſiderable family. The queſtion embarraſſed me not a little; I bluſhed, was confounded, and own, that, being leſs aſhamed to lie than to tell the truth, I anſwered, I was the ſon of the Baron de Steinbach, an officer of the German guards. "Tell me, likewiſe (replied the lady) for what reaſon you quitted Madrid. I offer you, beforehand, all the credit of my father, as well as of my brother, Don Gaſpard: that is the leaſt mark of gratitude I can ſhow to a gentleman who neglected the care of his own life to ſerve me." I made no difficulty of recounting to her all the circumſtances of my duel; upon which ſhe blamed the gentleman whom I had ſlain, and promiſed to intereſt her whole family in my favour.

When I had ſatisfied her curioſity, I begged her to gratify mine, and aſked whether her faith was free or plighted. "Three years ago (ſhe replied) my father obliged me to marry Don Diego de Lara, and I have been a widow fifteen months."—"Madam (ſaid I) what misfortune has deprived you of your huſband ſo ſoon?"—"I will tell you, Sir (reſumed the lady) in return for the confidence you have repoſed in me."

"Don

Digitized by Google

Don Diego de Lara was a very genteel cavalier, who entertained the moſt violent paſſion for me, and, in order to pleaſe me, put in practiſe, every day, all that the moſt tender and paſſionate lover could invent, to make himſelf agreeable to the object of his flame; but, though he poſſeſſed a thouſand good qualities, he could never touch my heart. Love is not always the effect of aſſiduities and diſtinguiſhed merit. Alas! (added ſhe) an utter ſtranger often enchants us at firſt ſight. Well, it was not in my power to love him; more confounded than charmed with the tokens of his tenderneſs, to which I was forced to make returns without inclination; though I, in ſecret, taxed myſelf with ingratitude. I likewiſe found my own ſituation very unhappy. Unluckily for him, as well as me, his delicacy was ſtill greater than his love. He diſcovered in my actions and diſcourſe the moſt ſecret emotions of my breaſt, and dived to the very bottom of my ſoul. He complained inceſſantly of my indifference, and deemed himſelf the more unhappy in being unable to pleaſe me, becauſe he very well knew that there was no rival in his way: for I was ſcarce ſixteen years old, and, before he offered me his hand, he had gained over all my women, who aſſured him, that no man had as yet attracted my regard. 'Yes, Seraphina (he would often ſay) I wiſh you had been preposſeſſed in favour of another, and that alone were the cauſe of your indifference to me:

Digitized by Google

my aſſiduities and your own virtue would triumph over that prejudice; but I deſpair of making a conqueſt of your heart, ſince it remains untouched by all the love I have ſhown.' Tired with hearing him repeat the ſame diſcourſe, I told him, that, inſtead of troubling his repoſe and mine by too much delicacy, he would do well to leave his grievances to time. And, truly, one of my age was not capable of reliſhing the refinements of ſuch a delicate paſſion, ſo that Don Diego ought to have taken my advice: but ſeeing a whole year elapſed, without his being farther advanced than the firſt day, he loſt his patience, or rather his reaſon; and, pretending to have an affair of conſequence at court, departed to ſerve as a volunteer in the Low Countries, where he ſoon found in battle that which he went to ſeek—I mean the end of his torments and life."

After the lady had favoured me with this relation, the ſingular character of her huſband became the ſubject of our diſcourſe; in which we were interrupted by the arrival of a courier, who delivered to Seraphina a letter from the Count de Polan. She aſked my permiſſion to read it, and I obſerved, that while ſhe peruſed it, ſhe grew pale and trembled. After having read it, ſhe lifted up her eyes to heaven, heaved a profound ſigh, and her face was in a moment covered with tears. I could not behold her grief with tranquillity: I was greatly diſturbed; and, as if I had preſaged the

Digitized by Google

the cruel ſtroke I was to ſuffer, felt myſelf chilled with a mortal fear. "Madam (ſaid I, with a faultering voice) may I aſk what are the fatal contents of that letter?"—"There, Sir (replied Seraphina in a melancholy manner, giving me the paper) read yourſelf what my father writes. Alas! you are but too much concerned."

I was confounded at her words, and, trembling while I took the letter, read:

"YOUR brother Don Gaſpard fought "yeſterday in the Prado*, where he re- "ceived a mortal thruſt, of which he died "this day; having declared, in his laſt mo- "ments, that the perſon who killed him is "the ſon of Baron de Steinbach, an officer of "the German Guards.—What adds to the "misfortune is, that the murtherer has eſcaped "me by flight: but whereſoever he conceals "himſelf, I ſhall ſpare no pains to find him "out; for which purpoſe I will write to ſome "governors, who will not fail to apprehend "him, if he paſſes through the towns of their "juriſdiction; and by letters directed to other "people, I will cauſe all the roads to be "blocked up.

"The Count de Polan."

You may eaſily conceive how all my faculties were diſordered by this billet. I remained

* Prado (which ſignifies a meadow) is the publick walk at Madrid, as the park is at London.

Digitized by Google

for ſome moments without motion or power of ſpeech; and even in the midſt of this depreſſion, perceiving what a fatal obſtruction the death of Don Gaſpard would be to my love, was ſeized with the moſt violent deſpair! I threw myſelf at the feet of Seraphina, and preſenting my naked ſword, "Madam (ſaid I) ſpare the Count de Polan the trouble of finding out a man, who might conceal himſelf from his reſentment. Revenge your brother, by ſacrificing his murtherer with your own hand.—Strike, Madam, and let the ſame ſword that deprived him of life, become fatal to his unfortunate adverſary."—"Sir (replied Seraphina, affected with my behaviour) I loved Don Gaſpard; therefore, although you killed him honourably, and he brought his misfortune upon himſelf, you may be aſſured I enter into the reſentment of my father. Yes, Don Alphonſo, I am your enemy, and will act againſt you every thing that the ties of blood and friendſhip can require: but I will not take the advantage of your bad fortune, which has put you in my power.—The ſame honour that arms me againſt you, hinders me from taking a baſe revenge. The rights of hoſpitality ought to be inviolable, and therefore I will not repay the ſervice you have done me, with the conduct of an aſſaſſin.—Fly, then; elude, if you can, our purſuit and the rigour of the laws, and ſave your life from the danger that threatens it."

"How,

Digitized by Google

"How, Madam! (I replied) when you can revenge yourſelf, do you leave it to the laws, which may perhaps baulk your reſentment? Ah! rather pierce the heart of a miſerable wretch, who does not deſerve your forbearance! No, Madam, do not honour me with ſuch a noble and generous proceeding.—You know not who I am: though I paſs in Madrid for the ſon of the Baron de Steinbach I am no other than an unfortunate foundling, whom he has brought up, out of pure compaſſion: I do not even know the authors of my being."—"No matter (ſaid Seraphina, interrupting me with precipitation, as if my laſt words had given her new pain) were you the loweſt of mankind, I will do what honour preſcribes."—"Well, Madam (ſaid I) ſince the death of a brother cannot provoke you to ſhed my blood, I will inceníe you by a new crime, the audacity of which, I hope, you will not excuſe—I adore you—I could not behold your charms without being dazzled with them; and, in ſpite of the obſcurity of my fate, had entertained the hope of making you mine for ever. I was ſo much in love, or rather ſo vain, as to flatter myſelf that heaven (which perhaps favours me by keeping my origin concealed) would diſcloſe it to me one day, when I ſhould be able to tell you my name without a bluſh.—After this confeſſion, which injures you ſo much, do you ſtill heſitate in puniſhing me?"—"This raſh declaration (replied the lady) would, doubtleſs,

Digitized by Google

leſs, offend me at another time, but I pardon it, in conſideration of your preſent agitation: beſides, my own anxiety will not permit me to attend to ſuch diſcourſe. Once more, Don Alphonſo (added ſhe, ſhedding ſome tears) leave this place, fly from a houſe you have filled with ſorrow; for every moment you ſtay increaſes my affliction."—"Madam, I will no longer reſiſt (ſaid I, riſing) I muſt baniſh myſelf from you; but think not that, ſtudious of preſerving a life which is odious to you, I will go and ſeek an aſylum where I can be ſecure.—No, no! I devote myſelf to your reſentment.—I will go to Toledo, wait with impatience for the fate you decree, and, expoſing myſelf to your purſuit, advance willingly towards the end of my misfortunes."

So ſaying, I withdrew: my horſe was brought out for me, and I repaired to Toledo*, where I ſtaid a whole week; and, truly, was at ſo little pains to conceal myſelf, that I don't know how I eſcaped being taken; for I cannot believe that the Count de Polan, whoſe chief care was to ſhut up all the paſſages againſt me, would imagine that I could not paſs through Toledo.—In fine, I yeſterday left that city, where I ſeemed to be tired of liberty;

* Toledo, ſituated on the Tagus, is the capital of New Caſtile, the ſeat of an archbiſhop, primate of all Spain: It was formerly famous for a circus, capable of containing 150,000 people. There is a great manufacture of ſilk and woolen ſtuffs in this city; in which, too, are made the beſt blades in the world; whence a good ſword is frequently called a Toledo.

Digitized by Google

liberty; and without keeping any certain road, am come to this hermitage, like a man who has nothing to fear.—You ſee, father, what engroſſes my thoughts, and I crave the aſſiſtance of your advice.

CHAP. XI.

The old hermit diſcovers himſelf, and Gil Blas perceives that he is among his acquaintance.

ALPHONSO having ended the melancholy narration of his misfortunes, the old hermit ſaid to him, "Son, you have been very imprudent in ſtaying ſo long at Toledo. I look upon all you have recounted in a light very different from that in which you ſee it, and your paſſion for Seraphina is, in my opinion, pure madneſs. Believe me, you muſt forget that young lady, who cannot poſſibly be your's.—Yield, therefore, with a good grace to the obſtacles that ſeparate you from her, and follow your deſtiny, which, in all likelihood, will be productive of many other adventures.—You will, queſtionleſs, find ſome other young lady, who will make the ſame impreſſion upon your heart, and whoſe brother you have not ſlain."

He was going to add a great many other things, in order to exhort Don Alphonſo to have patience, when we ſaw another hermit, loaded with a wallet, well ſtuffed, enter the hermitage. He was come from the town of Cuenca, where he had made a very ſucceſsful gather-

Digitized by Google

gathering; ſeemed younger than his companion, and wore a red buſhy beard. "Welcome, brother Antonio (ſaid the old anchorite to him) what news from town?"—"Bad enough (anſwered the red haired brother, putting a letter in his hand) that billet will inform you." The ſenior, having opened and read it with a ſuitable attention, cried, "God be praiſed! ſince the plot is diſcovered, we muſt regulate our conduct accordingly. Let us change our ſtile (added he.) Signor Don Alphonſo, you ſee a man expoſed like yourſelf to the caprice of fortune. I am informed from Cuenca, which is a town about a league from this, that ſomebody has done me an ill office with juſtice; all the agents of which are to ſet out to-morrow for this hermitage, in order to ſecure my perſon: but they ſhan't find the hare in the gin.—This is not the firſt time that I have been in ſuch dilemmas.—Thank God, I have almoſt always extricated myſelf in another ſhape; for ſuch as you ſee me, I am neither an old man nor an hermit."

So ſaying, he ſtripped himſelf of a long robe which he wore, and appeared in a doublet of black ſerge with ſlaſhed ſleeves.—Then he pulled off his cap, untied a ſtring that ſupported his falſe beard, and, all of a ſudden, aſſumed the figure of a man between twenty and thirty years of age. Brother Antony, by his example, quitted his hermit's habit, rid himſelf of his red beard in the ſame manner as his companion had done, and took out

of

Digitized by Google

of an old worm-eaten coffer, a ſhabby ſhort caſſock, with which he clothed himſelf.—But you may gueſs my ſurpriſe, when, in the perſon of the old anchorite, I recollected Signor Don Raphael; and in that of brother Antony, my moſt dear and faithful valet, Ambroſe de Lamela!—"Good God! (cried I, immediately) I find myſelf among my acquaintances here."—"True, Signor Gil Blas (ſaid Raphael, ſmiling) you have found two of your friends when you leaſt expected it. I confeſs you have ſome reaſon to complain of us; but let us forget what is paſt, and thank heaven for our meeting again. Ambroſe and I make a tender of our ſervices; and I can tell you they are not to be deſpiſed. You muſt not think us the worſt of mankind: we neither aſſault nor aſſaſſinate: we ſeek only to live at the expence of our neighbours; and if theft be a crime, neceſſity excuſes the injuſtice. Aſſociate with us, and lead a rambling life, which is extremely agreeable, when conducted with prudence; not but, with all our ſagacity, the chain of ſecond cauſes is ſometimes ſuch, that we meet with unlucky adventures! What then! we enjoy the good with the better reliſh on that very account.—We are hardened againſt inconſtant weather, and accuſtomed to the viciſſitudes of fortune."

"Signor Cavalier (added the falſe hermit, ſpeaking to Don Alphonſo) we make the ſame propoſal to you, which, conſidering your preſent ſituation, I think you ought not to

Digitized by Google

to reject; for, not to mention the affair that obliges you to conceal yourself, you must certainly be in want of money."—"Yes, truly, (said Don Alphonso) and that, I own, increases my chagrin."—"Well, then (replied Raphael) don't leave us; you cannot do better than to join your fortune to our's; you shall want nothing: and we will baffle all the search of your enemies. We know almost every inch of Spain, having travelled over it; and are acquainted with the woods, mountains, and every place proper for an asylum against the brutality of justice." Don Alphonso thanked them for their good will, and being actually without money or resource, resolved to bear them company. I came to the same determination, because I would not leave the young gentleman, for whom I felt a growing friendship.

Having agreed to go all together, we began to deliberate, whether we should set out that instant, or, first of all, give some assaults to a full bottle of excellent wine, which brother Antony, the day before, had brought from Cuenca; but Raphael, as a man of the greatest experience among us, represented that, before every thing else, we must think of our safety. He was of opinion, therefore, that we should march all night, in order to gain a very thick wood between Villardesa and Almodabar, in which we should halt, and, being perfectly secure, spend the day in taking our repose. This advice being approved, the false

Digitized by Google

falſe hermits made two bundles of their baggage and proviſions, and laid them in equilibrio on Don Alphonſo's horſe. This was done with great expedition; after which we quitted the hermitage, leaving as a prey to juſtice, the two hermit's-robes, with the white and red beards, two pallets, a table, a rotten cheſt, two old ſtraw-bottomed chairs, and the image of St. Pacomo.

We walked all night, and began to feel ourſelves very much fatigued, when, at day-break, we perceived the wood to which we were bound. The ſight of a port gives new vigour to ſailors tired with a long voyage!— We accordingly took courage, and at laſt arrived at the end of our journey before ſunriſe. Penetrating into the thickeſt part of the wood, we ſtopped at a very agreeable ſpot upon a ſmall glade, ſurrounded with a good many tall oaks, the branches of which, meeting, formed an umbrageous arch, impervious to the heat of the day. Here we unbridled the horſe to let him feed (after we had unloaded him) and ſitting down together, took out of brother Antony's wallet ſome large pieces of bread, with a good many ſlices of roaſted meat, and began to attack them as if for a wager. Nevertheleſs, in ſpite of our appetites, we often left off eating to embrace the bottle, which inceſſantly circulated, paſſing from the claſp of one into the embraces of another.

To-

Digitized by Google

Towards the end of the repaſt, Don Raphael ſaid to Don Alphonſo, "Signor Cavalier, after the confidence you have honoured me with, it is but juſt that I recount to you the hiſtory of my life, with the ſame ſincerity."—"It will give me great pleaſure" (replied the young man.) "And me in particular (ſaid I;) for I have an extreme curioſity to hear your adventures, which are doubtleſs well worth our attention."—"That I'll anſwer for (replied Raphael) and I intend to commit them to writing one day.—That ſhall be the amuſement of my old age; for I am ſtill young, and would have the volume enlarged: but at preſent we are fatigued: let us refreſh ourſelves with a few hours of ſleep. While we three enjoy our reſt, Ambroſe will watch againſt all ſurpriſe, and then ſleep in his turn. Though I believe we are very ſafe in this place, it is always good to be upon our guard." So ſaying, he ſtretched himſelf upon the graſs, Don Alphonſo did the ſame, I followed their example, and Lamela ſtood ſentry.

Don Alphonſo, inſtead of taking ſome repoſe, kept himſelf awake with reflecting upon his misfortune; and I could not cloſe an eye. As for Don Raphael, he ſoon fell aſleep; but awaking an hour after, and ſeeing us diſpoſed to liſten, he ſaid to Lamela, "Friend Ambroſe, thou may'ſt take now a comfortable nap. "No, no (replied Lamela) I have

Digitized by Google

have no inclination to ſleep; and though I am well acquainted with all the paſſages of your life, they are ſo inſtructive for people of our profeſſion, that I ſhall be very well entertained in hearing them recounted once more." Don Raphael immediately began the hiſtory of his life in theſe terms.

The End of the FOURTH BOOK.

THE

Digitized by Google

THE ADVENTURES OF GIL BLAS OF SANTILLANE.

BOOK V.

CHAP. I.

The hiſtory of Don Raphael.

I Am the ſon of an actreſs at Madrid, whoſe name was Lucinda, famous for her theatrical talents, and ſtill more for her gallantry. As for my father, I cannot, without preſumption, aſſume any one in particular. 'Tis true, I might tell what man of quality was in love with my mother when I came into the world, but that epocha would by no means be a convincing proof of his being the author of my birth. A woman of my mother's profeſſion is ſo little to be truſted, that even while ſhe appears the moſt attached to one nobleman, ſhe almoſt always ſubſti-

tutes

Digitized by Google

tutes in his place ſome other perſon for his money.

There is nothing like putting one's ſelf above ſcandal: Lucinda, inſtead of bringing me up in obſcurity at her own houſe, took me by the hand, without ceremony, and carried me to the theatre in a very honourable manner, without giving herſelf any trouble about the diſcourſe that paſſed at her expence, or the malicious ſneers that the ſight of me never failed to create. In a word, I was her darling, and careſſed by all the men that viſited her, ſo much, that it looked as if nature pleaded with them in my behalf.

I was allowed to paſs the firſt twelve years of my life in all ſorts of frivolous amuſements: ſcarce was I taught to read and write; and ſtill leſs pains were taken to initiate me in the principles of my religion: I learned only to dance, ſing, and play upon the guitarre.—This was all I could do, when the Marquis de Leganez aſked me as a companion to his only ſon, who was pretty much of my age. Lucinda willingly complied with his requeſt, and it was then I began to think ſeriouſly. Young Leganez was not farther advanced than I: that little nobleman did not ſeem qualified by nature for the ſciences. He hardly knew one letter of the alphabet, although he had been under the inſtruction of a preceptor fifteen months. His other maſters ſucceeded no better: he exhauſted their patience. They were not, indeed, permitted to uſe rigour; but

Digitized by Google

but expreſsly, ordered to inſtruct without tormenting him; and that order, joined to his natural dulneſs, rendered all their leſſons of little or no effect.

But the preceptor invented an excellent expedient to intimidate the young nobleman, without contradicting his father's order. He reſolved to flog me, when his pupil deſerved puniſhment; and he did not fail to put his reſolution in practice. Not reliſhing this expedient, I ran away, and complained to my mother of ſuch unjuſt treatment: but, in ſpite of all her tenderneſs for me, ſhe had ſtrength enough to reſiſt my tears, and conſidering that it was a great advantage for her ſon to live with the Marquis de Leganez, ſent me back immediately. I was now abandoned to the preceptor, who, perceiving that his invention had produced a good effect, continued to flog me ſtill, inſtead of the young nobleman; and, in order to make the deeper impreſſion upon him, diſciplined me with great ſeverity. I was ſure to pay, every day, for young Leganez; and I may venture to affirm, that he did not learn one letter of his alphabet, which did not cauſe me an hundred laſhes. Judge you what his rudiments ſtood me in.

The birch was not the only diſagreeable thing I ſuffered in this houſe: as every body knew me, the meaneſt ſervants, even the ſcullions, reproached me with my birth. This diſguſted me ſo much, that I ran away one day, after having found means to ſeize the pre-

Digitized by Google

preceptor's whole ſtock of ready money, which might amount to an hundred and fifty ducats. Such was the vengeance I took, for the ſtripes he had ſo unjuſtly beſtowed upon me. I performed this ſlight of hand with admirable dexterity, though it was my firſt eſſay; and having had the addreſs to baffle the ſearch that was made for me during two days, left Madrid and repaired to Toledo, without being purſued.

I was then juſt going into my fifteenth year. What a pleaſure it was to be independant at that age, and entirely maſter of my own actions! I ſoon contracted acquaintance with young people, who poliſhed me up, and aſſiſted me to ſpend my ducats: I aſſociated with knights of the poſt, who cultivated my happy diſpoſition ſo well, that, in a little time, I became one of the moſt dextrous of the order. At the end of five years, being ſeized with an inclination to travel, I quitted my confederates, and beginning my preregrinations by Eſtremadura, went as far as Alcantara: but before I reached that place, finding an opportunity of exerting my talents, I did not let it eſcape. Being a-foot, and moreover loaded with a pretty heavy knapſack, I frequently halted to repoſe myſelf under the trees, that offered me their ſhade, at a little diſtance from the highway. In one of theſe reſting-places, I found two lads very well dreſſed, talking merrily on the graſs, while they enjoyed the coolneſs of the ſhade. I ſaluted them

Digitized by Google

them very courteouſly, and entered into converſation with them, at which they did not ſeem diſpleaſed. The eldeſt was not more than fifteen, and they ſeemed both to be extremely raw. "Signor Cavalier (ſaid the youngeſt to me) we are ſons of two rich citizens of Placentia, who, longing extremely to ſee the kingdom of Portugal, in order to ſatisfy our curioſity, have taken an hundred piſtoles each from our parents; and, as we travel on foot, hope to go a great way with that ſum. What is your opinion of the matter?" "If I had ſo much (I replied) God knows where I ſhould go: I would viſit the four corners of the world. What the devil! two hundred piſtoles! 'tis an immenſe ſum, and you'll never ſee the end of it. If it be agreeable to you, gentlemen (added I) I ſhall have the honour of accompanying you as far as the city of Almeria, where I am going to take poſſeſſion of the eſtate of an uncle, who has been ſettled in that place twenty years, or thereabouts."

The young citizens aſſured me, they would be glad of my company. Whereupon, having reſted ourſelves a little, we ſet forwards all together towards Alcantara, where we arrived a good while before night, and went to lodge at a good inn. We aſked for a room, and were ſhown into one, where there was a preſs with a key in it. Having beſpoke ſupper, I propoſed to my comrades, that we ſhould go and ſee the town, while it was getting

Digitized by Google

ting ready. They accepted the propoſal, we locked our knapſacks in the preſs, the key of which one of the citizens put in his pocket, and going out of the inn went to view the churches. While we were in the cathedral I pretended, all of a ſudden, to have an affair of conſequence in hand, and ſaid to my companions, "Gentlemen, I have juſt recollected that a perſon of Toledo deſired me to deliver a ſhort meſſage to a merchant, who lives near this church. Pray, wait for me here, and I'll be back in an inſtant." So ſaying, I left them, ran to the inn, flew to the cheſt, forced the lock, and rummaging the knapſacks of my young cits, found their piſtoles. Poor children! I did not leave them ſo much as one to pay for their night's lodging. I carried all off, quitted the town as faſt as poſſible, and took the road to Merida, without giving myſelf any further concern about them.

That adventure put me in a condition to travel agreeably: though I was young, I found myſelf capable of conducting myſelf with prudence; and I may ſay, I was pretty old, conſidering my years. Having reſolved to buy a mule, I put my reſolution in practiſe at the next village. I even converted my knapſack into a portmanteau, and began to aſſume a little more of the man of conſequence. On the third day I met a man ſinging veſpers, as loud as he could roar, on the highway. Judging, by his appearance, that he was a

Digitized by Google

chanter, I accoſted him with courage. "Signor bachelor, you ſing purely; your heart goes with your profeſſion, I ſee."—"Sir (anſwered he) I am a chanter, at your ſervice, and amuſe myſelf with clearing my pipes, as you hear.

In this manner we entered into converſation, and I perceived that I had got in company with a moſt witty and agreeable fellow, about four or five and twenty years old. As he travelled on foot, I made my mule walk ſlowly, that I might have the pleaſure of converſing with him; and, among other things, the diſcourſe turned on Toledo. "I know that city perfectly well (ſaid the chanter) having lived a good while in it, and I believe have ſome friends there."—"In what place (anſwered I, interrupting him) did you live at Toledo?" He replied, "In the new ſtreet. I lived with Don Vincent de Buena Garra, Don Matthias de Cordel, and two or three more gentlemen of honour: we lodged, eat, and paſſed our time agreeably together." Theſe words ſurpriſed me; for it muſt be obſerved, that thoſe gentlemen, whoſe names he mentioned, were the very ſharpers with whom I had kept company at Toledo. "Signor Chanter (cried I) thoſe gentlemen, whom you have named, are of my acquaintance, and I lived with them in the new ſtreet."—"I underſtand you (he replied, ſmiling) that is to ſay, you are entered into the company, ſince I left it three years ago."—"I have (ſaid I) quitted

Digitized by Google

quitted theſe gentlemen, becauſe I was ſeized with an inclination to travel. I intend to make the tour of Spain; knowing that I ſhall improve by experience."—"Without doubt (he replied) one muſt travel before he can have a finiſhed education: it was for this reaſon that I left Toledo, where I lived very agreeably. I thank heaven (added he) for having met, when I leaſt expected it, a knight of my own order. Let us join, travel together, make attempts on our neighbour's purſe, and lay hold of every occaſion that preſents itſelf of exerting our ſkill."

He made this propoſal ſo frankly, and with ſuch a good grace, that I accepted it. He won my confidence all of a ſudden, in beſtowing his upon me, and we unboſomed ourſelves to one another. I recounted my hiſtory to him, and he made no myſtery of his adventures to me; letting me know, that he was juſt come from Portalegro, whence an unſucceſsful trick had obliged him to eſcape with precipitation in the dreſs he now wore. After he had communicated to me his whole affairs, we reſolved to go to Merida together, in order to try our fortune, by ſtriking ſome lucky ſtroke, if poſſible, and then immediately decamping to remove elſewhere. From that moment our ſtock became common betwixt us: indeed, Moralez (ſo my companion was called) was not in a very brilliant ſituation. His whole fortune conſiſted of five or ſix ducats, with ſome baggage that he carried

Digitized by Google

in a wallet: but, if I was richer than he in ready money, he, on the other hand, was more conſummate than I in the art of deceiving mankind.

We mounted my mule by turns, and, in this manner, arriving at Merida, halted at an inn in the ſuburbs, where my comrade took out of his wallet a dreſs, in which he was no ſooner clothed than he went to take a turn through the town, reconnoitre the ground, and look for an opportunity of going to work. We conſidered every object that preſented itſelf with great attention, and, as Homer would have ſaid, reſembled two kites, that caſt their eyes abroad to look for birds on which to prey. In ſhort, we waited in hopes that chance would afford an occaſion on which we might employ our induſtry, when we perceived in the ſtreet an old grey-haired gentleman fighting againſt three men, who puſhed hard at him. I was ſhocked at the inequality of the combat, and, as I am naturally a tilter, flew to the aſſiſtance of the old man: Moralez following my example, we attacked the gentleman's three enemies, and obliged them to ſeek their ſafety in flight.

The ſenior was mighty thankful. "We are very glad (ſaid I to him) that we happened to be here ſo ſeaſonably, to give you aſſiſtance: but let us know, at leaſt, who we have had the good fortune to ſerve; and pray tell us for what reaſon thoſe three men would have aſſaſſinated you."—"Gentlemen (he replied)

Digitized by Google

plied) I am too much obliged to refuſe the ſatisfaction you deſire. My name is Jerome de Moyadas, and I live on my fortune in this city: one of thoſe aſſaſſins, from whom you have delivered me, made love to my daughter, aſked her of me in marriage ſome days ago, and, as he could not obtain my conſent, attacked me ſword in hand, in order to be revenged."—"And may one aſk (I replied) your reaſon for refuſing your conſent to that gentleman?"—"I will tell you (ſaid he:) I had a brother, a merchant in this city, whoſe name was Auguſtin; two months ago he was at Calatrava, and lodged at the houſe of Juan Velez de Menbrilla, his correſpondent, with whom he was ſo intimate, that, in order to ſtrengthen their friendſhip ſtill more, he promiſed my only daughter Florentina in marriage to his ſon, not doubting that he had credit enough with me to perform his promiſe. Accordingly, my brother, upon his return to Merida, no ſooner mentioned the affair, than I, out of love to him, conſented to the marriage. He then ſent Florentina's picture to Calatrava; but, alas! had not the ſatisfaction of finiſhing the work, for he died three weeks ago, conjuring me, on his death-bed, to diſpoſe of my daughter to none but his correſpondent's ſon. This I promiſed, and on this account refuſed Florentina to the gentleman who aſſaulted me, although he is a very advantageous match. I am a ſlave to my word, and every moment expect the ſon of

Digitized by Google

Juan Velez de Menbrilla, on whom I will beſtow my daughter in marriage, though I never ſaw either him or his father. I beg pardon (continued Jerome de Moyades) for troubling you with this oration: but you yourſelf exacted it of me."

I liſtened to him with great attention, and reſolved upon a trick that ſtruck me in the head of a ſudden, affected great aſtoniſhment, lifted up my eyes to heaven, and turning towards the old man, ſaid, in a pathetick tone, "Ah, Signor Moyadas! is it poſſible, that, on my firſt arrival at Merida, I ſhould be ſo happy as to ſave the life of my father-in-law!" The old citizen was ſtrangely ſurpriſed at theſe words, as well as Moralez, who ſhowed by his countenance what a great rogue he took me to be. "What do I hear? (replied the ſenior.) How! are you the ſon of my brother's correſpondent?"—"Yes, Signor Jerome de Moyadas (anſwered I, with an audacious countenance, while I threw my arms about his neck) I am that happy mortal for whom the adorable Florentina is deſtined. But, before I expreſs my joy at entering into your family, allow me to ſhed into your boſom the tears which the remembrance of your brother Auguſtin renews! I ſhould be the moſt ungrateful of all mankind, if I was not ſenſibly touched with the death of a perſon to whom I owe all the happineſs of my life!" So ſaying, I again embraced honeſt Jerome, and covered my eyes with my hand, on pretence of wiping away

Digitized by Google

away my tears. Moralez, who, in a twinkling, perceived the advantage we might reap from a trick of this kind, did not fail to second the impoſture, and paſſing for my valet, even topped me in the ſorrow I had manifeſted for the death of Signor Auguſtin. "Signor Jerome (cried he) what a loſs you have ſuffered in your brother's death! he was ſuch an honeſt man! the very phœnix of commerce! a diſintereſted merchant! a merchant of integrity! there are few of his fellows to be met with."

We had to do with a ſimple and credulous man, who, ſo far from ſuſpecting the cheat, was himſelf an aſſiſtant in it. "And why (ſaid he) did you not come ſtraight to my houſe? You ſhould not have gone to lodge at an inn; conſidering the terms on which we are, no ceremony ought to have been obſerved."—"Sir (anſwered Moralez, taking upon him to ſpeak for me) my maſter is, I grant you, a little ceremonious: not but that he is excuſable in ſome ſhape, in being unwilling to appear before you in his preſent ſituation: for we have been robbed in our journey hither and loſt all our baggage."—"The young man (ſaid I, interrupting him) tells you nothing but the truth, Signor de Moyades. This misfortune did not permit me to come to your houſe: I durſt not preſent myſelf in this garb before the eyes of a miſtreſs who has not as et ſeen me; and, for that reaſon, I waited the eturn of a valet, whom I have ſent to Cala-

Digitized by Google

trava."—"This accident (replied the old man) ought not to have hindered you from coming to ſtay at my houſe, where I intend you ſhall immediately take up your lodging."

So ſaying, he carried me home with him; and, by the way, we talked of the pretended robbery that I had ſuffered, when I aſſured him, that what gave me the greateſt concern, was my having loſt, with my baggage, the picture of Florentina. Whereupon the citizen obſerved with a ſmile, that I might conſole myſelf for that loſs the more eaſily, as the original was better than the copy. In effect, as ſoon as we came to his houſe, he called his daughter, who was not above ſixteen years of age, and might have been counted an accompliſhed young lady; ſaying to me, "You ſee the object which my late brother promiſed to you."—"Ah, Signor! (cried I, with a paſſionate air) you have no occaſion to tell me, that this is the amiable Florentina! theſe charming features are engraved on my memory, and ſtill more upon my heart. If the picture which I loſt, and which was only a ſlight ſketch of ſuch perfection, could inflame me with the moſt ardent paſſion, judge how I muſt be tranſported at this moment!" "You flatter me too much (ſaid Florentina) for I am not vain enough to imagine that my qualifications juſtify your diſcourſe."—"Go on with your compliments," (ſaid the father.) At the ſame time he left me alone with his daughter, and taking Moralez aſide, "Friend, (ſaid

Digitized by Google

(ſaid he to him) you have loſt all your baggage, then, and, without doubt your money too."—"Yes, Sir (anſwered my comrade) a great number of banditti poured upon us, near Caſtil Blazo, and left us nothing but the clothes on our backs: but we ſhall, in a very ſhort time, receive bills of exchange, which will ſet all things to rights again."

"But, untill thoſe bills arrive (replied the old man, taking a purſe out of his pocket) here are an hundred piſtoles at your ſervice." "O, Sir! (ſaid Moralez) my maſter would not accept them for the world. I find you don't know him. Zooks! he is a man of great delicacy on theſe occaſions. He is none of thoſe faſhionable youngſters, who are apt to take up from every body. He does not love to be in debt, and would rather beg his bread than borrow one farthing."—"So much the better (ſaid the honeſt citizen;) I eſteem him the more on that account: I cannot bear to ſee young men contract debts. I pardon it indeed in people of quality, becauſe it is a privilege they have poſſeſſed a long time. I won't (continued he) affront thy maſter, and ſince it will only give him pain to offer him money, we muſt ſay no more about it." With theſe words, he was going to put the purſe in his pocket again, but my companion held his hand, ſaying, "Hold, Signor Moyadas, whatever averſion my maſter has to borrowing, I don't deſpair of prevailing upon him to accept your hundred piſtoles.

Digitized by Google

It is only from ſtrangers he is ſhy of borrowing; he is not ſo ceremonious with his own family: he can even demand of his father, with a good grace, whatever money he has occaſion for. The young gentleman, you perceive, knows how to diſtinguiſh perſons, and ought to look upon you, Sir, as a ſecond father."

Moralez, by ſuch diſcourſe, ſecured the purſe of the old man, who came and rejoined us; and finding his daughter and me engaged in mutual compliments, interrupted our converſation, by telling Florentina the obligation he lay under to me; and, on that ſcore, made me profeſſions which convinced me of his gratitude. I laid hold of ſuch a favourable diſpoſition, and told the citizen, that the moſt ſenſible mark of acknowledgement he could ſhow, would be to haſten my marriage with his daughter. He yielded with a good grace to my impatience, aſſuring me, that in three days at fartheſt I ſhould be Florentina's huſband, and that inſtead of ſix thouſand ducats, which he had promiſed for her dower, he would give me ten, as a proof of his being deeply affected with the ſervice I had done him.

Moralez and I, therefore, lived with the honeſt man, Jerome de Moyadas, kindly treated, and in the agreeable expectation of ten thouſand ducats, with which we propoſed to make a ſudden decampment from Merida. Our joy, however, was checked by fear: we were

Digitized by Google

were apprehenſive, that in leſs than three days, the true ſon of Juan Velez de Menbrilla would arrive, and croſs our good fortune.

This fear was by no means ill founded: for, the very next day, a kind of peaſant, loaded with a portmanteau, came to the houſe of Florentina's father, when I was not at home, though my comrade was preſent. "Sir (ſaid the peaſant to the old man) I belong to a young gentleman of Calatrava, called Signor de la Menbrilla, who is to be your ſon-in-law. We are juſt arrived, and he will be here preſently. I came before to give you notice of his approach." He had ſcarce ſpoke theſe words, when his maſter appeared: a circumſtance that ſurpriſed the old man very much, and diſconcerted Moralez a little.

Pedro, who was a very genteel young fellow, addreſſed himſelf to Florentina's father: but the honeſt citizen did not give him time to finiſh his diſcourſe, and, turning to my companion, aſked the meaning of all this. Then Moralez, who was ſecond to no man on earth in impudence, aſſumed an air of aſſurance, and ſaid to the old man, "Sir, theſe two men belong to the troop of thieves who robbed us on the highway: I recollect them both very well, particularly him who has the audacity to call himſelf the ſon of Signor Juan Velez de la Menbrilla." The old citizen believed Moralez, and, perſuaded that the ſtrangers were cheats, ſaid to them, "Gentlemen, you come too late: your ſcheme is prevented:

Digitized by Google

Pedro de la Menbrilla has been in my houſe ſince yeſterday."—"Take care of what you ſay (anſwered the young man of Calatrava) you have got an impoſtor in your family; for you muſt know that Juan Velez de Menbrilla has no other ſon than me."—"I know better (replied the old man) and am not ignorant of your profeſſion: don't you recollect this young man, and remember his maſter, whom you robbed."—"If I was not in your houſe (ſaid Pedro) I would puniſh the inſolence of that cheat, who has the preſumption to call me a robber. Let him thank your preſence, that reſtrains my indignation. Sir, (added he) you are impoſed upon. I am the young man to whom your brother Auguſtin promiſed his niece. If you deſire it, I can ſhow all the letters which he wrote to my father on the ſubject of the marriage. Will you not believe it when you ſee the picture of Florentina, which he ſent to me ſome time before his death."

"No! (ſaid the old citizen, interrupting him) neither the picture, nor the letters, will convince me: I know very well in what manner they fell into your hands, and I adviſe you, as a friend, to be gone from Merida as ſoon as you can."—"This is too much (cried the young gentleman in his turn) I will not ſuffer my name to be ſtolen with impunity, nor myſelf to be treated like an highwayman. I know ſome people in this place, whom I will find, and return to confound this impoſtor

Digitized by Google

for that has prejudiced you againſt me." So ſaying, he retired with his valet, and Moralez remained maſter of the field: nay, this adventure made Jerome de Moyadas reſolve to have the marriage celebrated that very day, and he went out inſtantly, to give the neceſſary orders for the occaſion.

Though my comrade was very well pleaſed to ſee Florentina's father in a diſpoſition ſo favourable for us, he was far from being perfectly at eaſe; fearing the conſequence of the meaſures which he concluded Pedro would certainly take, he waited for me with impatience to communicate what had happened. Finding him, at my return, plunged in a profound reverie, "What is the matter, friend? (ſaid I) thou ſeemeſt in a brown ſtudy." He replied, "If I am, it is not without reaſon." and informed me of the whole affair; adding, "Thou ſeeſt what cauſe I have to muſe. It was thou alone, who raſhly threw us into that dilemma. It was a ſhining enterpriſe, I own, and would have crowned thee with glory had it ſucceeded: but, in all appearance, it will end ill; and it is my advice, that, in order to prevent explanations, we immediately betake ourſelves to our heels, with the feather which we have plucked from the honeſt man's wing."

"Mr. Moralez (anſwered I to this propoſal) you yield to difficulties, I find, very ſoon, and don't do a great deal of honour to Don Matthias de Cordel, and the other cavaliers

Digitized by Google

liers, with whom you lived at Toledo: one, who has ſerved his apprenticeſhip under ſuch able maſters, ought not to be eaſily alarmed. As for me, who intend to walk in the ſteps of theſe heroes, and prove myſelf a worthy pupil, I will bear up againſt the obſtacle that terrifies you, and make my utmoſt effort to ſurmount it."——" If you accompliſh that (ſaid my companion) I will prefer you to all the great men in Plutarch."

Juſt as Moralez had done ſpeaking, Jerome de Moyades coming in ſaid to me, " You ſhall be my ſon-in-law this very evening: your ſervant, I ſuppoſe, has told you what happened. What do you think of the impudence of the rogue, who would have made me believe that he was the ſon of my brother's correſpondent?"--" Signor (anſwered I, in a melancholy tone, and with the moſt ingenuous air I could affect) I find I am not qualified to carry on a deceit. I muſt ſincerely own that I am not the ſon of Juan Velez de Menbrilla." " What do I hear! (cried the old man, interrupting me with equal precipitation and ſurpriſe) How! you not the young man, to whom my brother"——" Pray, Sir (ſaid I, interrupting him in my turn) be ſo good as to hear me to an end. I have loved your daughter theſe eight days, during which my paſſion has detained me at Merida; and yeſterday, after having come to your aſſiſtance, I was about to demand her in marriage, when you ſtopped my mouth, by giving me to underſtand

Digitized by Google

ſtand that ſhe was deſtined for another. You told me, that your brother, in his laſt moments, conjured you to beſtow her upon Pedro de la Menbrilla; that you promiſed to comply with his requeſt, and, in ſhort, that you was a ſlave to your word. This information, I confeſs, overwhelmed me, and my love, reduced to deſpair, inſpired me with the ſtratagem I put in practiſe. I muſt tell you, however, that I ſecretly upbraided myſelf with the trick I had put upon you; but I flattered myſelf that you would forgive it, when I ſhould have diſcovered it, and convinced you, that I am an Italian prince, who travel incognito, and that my father is ſovereign of certain vallies ſituated between the Swiſs, the Milaneſe, and Savoy. I imagined that you would be agreeably ſurpriſed, when I ſhould have revealed my birth; and I felt all the pleaſure of a delicate and paſſionate huſband, in the hope of declaring it to Florentina, after our marriage. Heaven (added I, changing my tone) would not indulge me in ſo much joy: Pedro de la Menbrilla appears, and I muſt reſtore him his name, how much ſoever the reſtitution will coſt me. You are engaged, by your promiſe, to chooſe him for a ſon-in-law; and it is your duty to prefer him to me, without regard to my rank, or compaſſion for the cruel ſituation to which you are going to reduce me, I will not pretend to repreſent, that your brother was only the uncle of your daughter, and that you being

Digitized by Google

ing her father, it is more juſt to acquit yourſelf of the obligation you owe to me, than to make it a point of honour to keep a promiſe, which is but ſlightly binding."

"Yes, doubtleſs, it is ſo (cried Jerome de Moyadas) therefore I do not intend to heſitate between you and Don Pedro de la Menbrilla. If my brother Auguſtin was ſtill alive he would not blame me for giving the preference to a man who ſaved my life, and who is, moreover, a prince, who does not diſdain to aſk my alliance. I muſt be an enemy to my own happineſs, and entirely deprived of my underſtanding, if I did not give you my daughter, and even preſs the celebration of the marriage."—"But, Signor (I replied) do nothing impetuouſly, conſult your intereſt only, and, notwithſtanding the nobility of my blood"—"Sure you jeſt! (ſaid he, interrupting me) ought I to heſitate one moment? No, my prince, I muſt humbly beſeech you to honour the happy Florentina with your hand this very evening."—"Well (ſaid I) be it ſo; go carry the news yourſelf, and inform her of her glorious fate."

While the honeſt citizen flew eagerly to tell his daughter, that ſhe had made a conqueſt of a prince, Moralez, who had heard the whole converſation, threw himſelf on his knees before me, ſaying, "Monſignor the Italian prince, ſon of a ſovereign of the vallies ſituated between the Swiſs, Milaneſe, and Savoy, give me leave to embrace the feet of your high-

Digitized by Google

highneſs, and teſtify, the exceſſive joy I feel. Upon the faith of a knave, I look upon you as a prodigy. I thought myſelf the firſt man in the world, but truly I ſtrike to you, although you have leſs experience than I."—"What! you are no longer uneaſy I hope," (ſaid I to him.) "Oh! not at all (anſwered he) I am no longer afraid of Signor Pedro; let him come again as ſoon as he pleaſes." Moralez and I now being firm in the ſtirrups, began to regulate the courſe we ſhould take with the dowry, on which we depended ſo much, that we could not have thought ourſelves more ſecure of it had it been already in our pockets. We had not as yet got it for all that, and the cataſtrophe of the adventure did not anſwer our expectation.

In a little time the young man of Calatrava returned, accompanied by two citizens and an alguazil, as formidable on account of his wiſkers and ſwarthy complexion as of his employment. Florentina's father being preſent, "Signor de Moyadas (ſaid Pedro to him) I have brought hither three creditable people, who know me, and can tell you who I am."—"Yes, ſure! (cried the alguazil) I can tell, and I certify to all whom it may concern, that I know you. Your name is Pedro, and you are the only ſon of Juan Velez de la Menbrilla: whoever maintains the contrary is an impoſtor."—"I believe you, Mr. Alguazil (ſaid the honeſt man Jerome de Moyadas) your evidence is ſacred with me,

as

Digitized by Google

as well as that of the gentleman merchants who are along with you. I am fully convinced that the young cavalier, who conducted you hither, is the only ſon of my brother's correſpondent: but that does not ſignify, I am no longer in the mind to give him my daughter."

"Oho! that's another affair (ſaid the alguazil) I come hither only to aſſure you, that I know this young man. You are maſter of your child, and nobody can compel you to part with her againſt your inclination."—"Nor do I intend (ſaid Pedro, interrupting him) to offer violence to the inclination of Signor de Moyadas; but, he will give me leave to aſk, why he has changed his ſentiments, or if he has any cauſe to complain of me. Let me be aſſured, at leaſt, that I have not loſt the ſweet hope of being his ſon-in-law by my own miſbehaviour."—"I have no cauſe to complain of you (replied the old man) and will even own, that it is with regret I ſee myſelf under a neceſſity of breaking my word, for which I conjure you to forgive me. I am perſuaded, that you are too generous to take it amiſs, that I prefer you to a rival who has ſaved my life. Here he is (purſued he, ſhowing me to the company) this is the perſon who reſcued me from the moſt imminent danger; and that my excuſe may have ſtill more force, I muſt inform you he is no leſs than an Italian prince."

At

Digitized by Google

At theſe laſt words, Pedro became mute and confounded; the two merchants ſtared with the utmoſt ſurpriſe; but the alguazil, accuſtomed to look upon the worſt ſide of every thing, ſuſpected this wonderful adventure to be a trick that might turn out to his advantage; he eyed me very attentively, and his good-will being baffled by my features, which were utterly unknown to him, he examined my comrade with the ſame attention. Unluckily for my highneſs, he recollected Moralez, and remembering to have ſeen him in the priſon of Ciudad Real, "Aha! (cried he) here is one of our cuſtomers; I remember this gentleman, who, I aſſure you is one of the moſt perfect ſharpers within the kingdoms and principalities of Spain."—"Softly, Mr. Alguazil (ſaid Jerome de Moyadas) the young man whom you paint ſo diſadvantageouſly, is the domeſtick of a prince."—"Very well (replied the alguazil) I know enough to form my reſolution accordingly, and judge of the maſter by the man. I don't doubt that theſe gallants are two cheats, who have agreed to impoſe upon you. I know how to manage in ſuch caſes; and to let you ſee that theſe wits are adventures, I will carry them inſtantly to jail. I intend to introduce them to a private converſation with Monſieur the Corregidor; after which, they will feel that whipping is not yet out of faſhion."—"Hold there, maſter officer (replied the old man) don't let us puſh matters ſo far: people of your

Digitized by Google

your profeſſion are not afraid of giving pain to a worthy man. May not this valet be a rogue, and his maſter a man of honour! Is it a new thing to ſee ſharpers in the ſervice of princes?"—"You joke with your princes (ſaid the alguazil) this young fellow is a knight of the poſt, you may depend upon it, and I arreſt him and his comrade in the king's name. I have twenty ſoldiers at the door, who ſhall drag them to priſon, if they refuſe to go with a good grace. Come, my prince (addreſſing himſelf to me) let us march."

I was thunderſtruck at theſe words, as well as Moralez, and our concern rendered us ſuſpected to Jerome de Moyadas; or rather convinced him, that we actually had a deſign to defraud him. On this occaſion, however, he behaved like a gallant man; ſaying to the alguazil, "Maſter officer, perhaps your ſuſpicions are falſe, and perhaps they are but too true. Be it as it will, let us dive no farther into the affair: let theſe two young cavaliers retire whereſoever they pleaſe to go, and I beg you will not oppoſe their retreat: it is a favour I aſk, in order to acquit myſelf of the obligation I owe them."—"Where I ſtrictly to do my duty (anſwered the alguazil) I ſhould impriſon theſe gentlemen, without having any regard to your intreaty; but, for your ſake, I will relax a little, provided that they quit the town this inſtant: for if I meet them to-morrow, egad! they ſhall ſee what will become of them."

When

Digitized by Google

When Moralez and I underſtood that we were free, we recollected ourſelves a little, endeavoured to talk boldly, and affirm that we were perſons of honour; but the alguazil ſilenced us with a fierce look; and I don't know how, theſe people have an aſcendancy over us. We were obliged, therefore, to abandon Florentina and her portion to Pedro de la Menbrilla, who, doubtleſs, became the ſon-in-law of Jerome de Moyadas, and retire with all ſpeed, taking the road to Truxillo, with the conſolation of having, at leaſt, got an hundred piſtoles by the adventure. About an hour before night, paſſing by a little village, with a reſolution of going farther before we ſhould halt, we perceived an inn of a pretty good appearance for that place, and the landlord, with his wife, ſitting on long ſtones at the door. The huſband, a tall, meagre old fellow, thrummed upon a wretched guitarre, for the diverſion of his wife, who ſeemed to liſten with pleaſure. "Gentlemen (cried the landlord, when he ſaw we did not ſtop) I adviſe you to halt at this place: you won't find a village within three weary leagues of this; and even there, I aſſure you, you won't be ſo well ſerved as here: take my word for it, and walk into my houſe, where I will entertain you handſomely, at a reaſonable rate." We ſuffered ourſelves to be perſuaded, and approaching the man and his wife, bid them good even; and having ſeated ourſelves by them, began all four to talk of indifferent

Digitized by Google

indifferent ſubjects. The landlord ſaid he was an officer of the holy brotherhood, and his wife was a fat merry dame, who ſeemed to underſtand very well how to vend her commodities.

Our converſation was interrupted by the arrival of twelve or fifteen cavaliers, ſome mounted on mules, and ſome on horſe-back, followed by thirty baggage moyls loaded with bales. "Ah! what a number of princes! (cried the landlord, at ſight of ſo many people) where ſhall I find lodging for them all?" In a moment the village was crouded with men and beaſts. There was luckily, near the inn, a vaſt barn, in which the moyls and the baggage were diſpoſed: the mules and horſes belonging to the cavaliers were put in other places; and as for the men, they did not concern themſelves ſo much about finding beds, as in beſpeaking a good ſupper. The landlord, his wife, and a young maid-ſervant belonging to the houſe, were not idle; they ſlaughtered all the poultry in their yard, which joined to ſome ragouts made of rabbets and cats, and a plentiful diſh of ſoup, compoſed of cauliflowers and mutton, furniſhed entertainment enough for the whole company.

Moralez and I looked at the cavaliers, who from time to time eyed us alſo. At laſt we entered into converſation, and told them, that if it was agreeable, we would ſup in company. They aſſured us that we could not do them a greater pleaſure: ſo we ſat down all together

at

Digitized by Google

at table. There was one among them, who ſeemed to be the chief, and for whom the reſt, though otherwiſe very familiar, did not fail to ſhow ſome deference: it is true, indeed, he kept the upper end, talked in an elevated tone of voice, and even contradicted ſometimes, in a cavalier manner, the ſentiments of the reſt, who, far from replying in the ſame manner to him, ſeemed to reſpect his opinions. The diſcourſe falling, by accident, on Andaluſia; and Moralez taking it into his head to praiſe Seville, this man ſaid to him, "Signor Cavalier, you are making the eulogium of the city where I firſt drew breath, or at leaſt I was born in its neighbourhood, ſince the town of Mayrena gave me to the world." "I can ſay the ſame thing (anſwered my companion) I was likewiſe born at Mayrena, and I muſt certainly know your parents: pray, whoſe ſon are you?"—"I am (ſaid the cavalier) the ſon of an honeſt notary, called Martin Moralez."—"Upon my faith (cried my comrade with emotion) the adventure is extremely ſingular: you are then my eldeſt brother, Manuel Moralez."—"The very ſame (ſaid the other) and you are, I ſuppoſe, my young brother, Lewis, whom I left in the cradle, when I quitted my father's houſe?" "That is my name, indeed," (replied my comrade.) Upon which they both got up, and embraced one another with great affection. Then Signor Manuel ſaid to the company, "Gentlemen, this event is altogether mar-

Digitized by Google

marvellous! I have, by accident, met and diſcovered a brother, whom I have not ſeen theſe twenty years and more: allow me to preſent him to the company." All the cavaliers, who kept themſelves ſtanding, out of complaiſance, ſaluted the young Moralez, and loaded him with careſſes. Afterwards, we ſat down again at table, where we remained all night, without going to bed; the two brothers ſitting by one another, and converſing by themſelves about their family, while the other gueſts drank and made merry.

Lewis, after a long converſation with Manuel, taking me aſide, ſaid, "All theſe cavaliers are domeſticks of the Count de Montanos, whom the king has lately named for viceroy of Majorca. They are conducting their maſter's equipage to Alicant, where they are to embark. My brother, who is become ſteward to that nobleman, has propoſed to carry me along with him; and, on account of the reluctance I expreſſed in leaving you, told me, that if you would accompany us, he would procure for you a good employment. Dear friend (added he) I adviſe thee not to diſdain the offer: let us go together to the iſland of Majorca; if we find it agreeable, we will ſtay there, and if we ſhall be diſpleaſed with our ſituation, we will return to Spain."

I willingly embraced the propoſal; young Moralez and I joined the count's officers, and ſet out with them from the inn before day.

Having

Digitized by Google

Having by long marches, gained the city of Alicant, I bought a guitarre, and took off a handſome ſuit of clothes before our embarkation; thinking of nothing but the iſland of Majorca; and Lewis Moralez was in the ſame diſpoſition. We ſeemed to have renounced ſharping altogether. To tell you the truth, we had a mind to paſs for perſons of honour among the cavaliers in whoſe company we were, and that kept a check upon our geniuſes. At laſt we went merrily on board, flattering ourſelves with the hopes of being at Majorca in a very little time; but ſcarce had we cleared the gulf of Alicant, when a terrible tempeſt aroſe. I might in this place of my relation, take an opportunity to make a fine deſcription of the ſtorm; to paint the air all on fire, to make the thunder roar, the winds whiſtle, the mountain billows roll, &c. But all theſe flowers of rhetorick apart, I aſſure you the hurricane was violent, and obliged us to bear away for the point of the iſland of Cabrera, a deſert iſle, in which there is a little fort, at that time garriſoned by an officer and five or ſix ſoldiers, who gave us a very hoſpitable reception.

As we were obliged to ſtay there ſeveral days, in order to repair our ſails and tackle, we invented different kinds of amuſements to paſs the time agreeably. Each followed his own inclinations: ſome played at Primero, others ſought different diverſions, and I went to walk through the iſland, accompanied by

Digitized by Google

thoſe who loved ſuch exerciſe. We ſkipped from rock to rock, for the ground was very uneven, full of ſtones, and very deficient in good ſoil. One day, while we conſidered theſe parched withered places, and admired the caprice of nature, that ſhows herſelf fruitful or barren as ſhe pleaſes, our noſes were invaded all of a ſudden with a moſt agreable ſmell. We immediately turned to the eaſtward, from whence that odour came, and perceived with aſtoniſhment, among the rocks, a large, round, green ſpot, ſurrounded with honey-ſuckles, even more beautiful and ſweet-ſcented than thoſe that grow in Andaluſia. We approached with pleaſure thoſe charming ſhrubs, which perfumed the air all round, and found that they bordered upon the entry of a very deep cavern, which being large and light, we deſcended to the bottom of it, turning by ſteps of ſtone, the ends of which were adorned with flowers, the whole forming a natural winding ſtair-caſe. When we had got down, we ſaw ſeveral little rills of water, which derived their ſources from drops that inceſſantly diſtilled from the rocks within, creeping along ſand more yellow than gold, and loſing themſelves in the earth. The water ſeemed ſo pure, that we were tempted to drink, and found it ſo freſh, that we reſolved to return next day to the ſame place with ſome bottles of wine, perſuaded that we ſhould empty them with vaſt pleaſure.

It

Digitized by Google

It was with regret we quitted ſuch an agreeable place, and, when we went back to the fort, we did not fail to boaſt of our diſcovery; but the commandent cautioned us, as a friend, againſt returning to the cavern, with which we were ſo much charmed. "For what? (ſaid I to him.) Is there any thing to fear?" "Yes, without doubt (he replied): the corſairs of Algiers and Tripoli ſometimes land on this iſle, to water at that ſpring, and one day ſurpriſed two ſoldiers of my garriſon, whom they made ſlaves." It was in vain for the officer to tell us this with a very ſerious air; he could not perſuade us, for we believed that he jeſted; and next day I returned to the cavern, with three more of my companions, without providing ourſelves with fire-arms, to ſhow that we dreaded nothing. Young Moralez would not be of the party, chooſing rather to ſtay with his brother, and play in the fort.

Having deſcended, as the day before, to the bottom of the cave, we cooled ſome bottles of wine, that we had brought along with us, in the rivulets; and while we drank them deliciouſly, playing on the guitarre, and converſing pleaſantly together, we ſaw ſeveral men appear at the mouth of the cavern above, with large wiſkers, turbans, and Turkiſk dreſs. We imagined that it was a part of the Count's domeſticks, with the commandant of the Fort, who had thus diſguiſed themſelves in order to frighten us; and prepoſſeſſed with

Digitized by Google

this fancy, began to laugh, letting no leſs than ten of them come down, without thinking of defending ourſelves. We were, however, ſoon undeceived in a melancholy manner, and convinced that it was a corſair, who came with his people to carry us off. Surrender, you dogs (he cried, in the Caſtilian tongue) or you ſhall be all put to the ſword." At the ſame time his followers preſented their carabines to us, and we ſhould have undergone a fine diſcharge had we made the leaſt reſiſtance. We preferred ſlavery to death, and gave our ſwords to the pirate, who ordered us to be loaded with chains, and conducted to his veſſel, which was not far off: then ſetting ſail, he ſteered with a fair wind towards Algiers.

In this manner were we puniſhed for neglecting the caution of the officer of the garriſon. The firſt thing that the corſair did, was to rifle us of all the money we had. What a fine windfall for him! The two hundred piſtoles taken from the young citizens of Placentia, the hundred which Moralez had received from Jerome de Moyadas, and which unluckily I had about me, were all ſwept away without mercy. My companions had alſo their purſes well furniſhed. In ſhort, it was an excellent prize. The pirate was rejoiced at his good luck; and the raſcal, not ſatisfied with our plunder, inſulted us with his raillery, which we did not feel half ſo much as the neceſſity that compelled us to bear it.

After

Digitized by Google

After a thouſand jokes, he ordered the bottles of wine which we had cooled at the fountain, and which his people had taken care to ſieze, to be brought to him, and began to empty them with his crew, drinking to our health by way of deriſion.

During this conjuncture, the countenances of my comrades expreſſed the pain they felt; and their ſlavery mortified them the more, becauſe they had formed the moſt delightful idea of their voyage to the iſland of Majorca, where they had laid their account with leading a moſt delicious life. As for me, I had fortitude enough to project a plan of conduct for myſelf; and, leſs afraid than my fellows, entered into converſation with the rallier, and even returned his jokes with a good grace. Pleaſed with my behaviour. "Young man (ſaid he) I like thy diſpoſition; for, in the main, inſtead of ſighing and groaning, it is better for one to arm himſelf with patience, and ſail with the ſtream. Play to us a ſmall air (added he, obſerving that I had a guitarre) let us ſee what thou canſt do." I obeyed him, as ſoon as he had ordered my arms to be unchained, and began to thrum upon my guitarre in ſuch a manner as acquired his applauſe. I had indeed learned under the beſt maſter in Madrid, and played on that inſtrument pretty well. I ſang likewiſe, and my voice gave no leſs ſatisfaction. All the Turks in the veſſel expreſſed the pleaſure they felt in hearing me, by geſtures of admiration: a cir-

Digitized by Google

cumſtance from which I concluded, that their taſte for muſic was not extremely delicate. The pirate whiſpered to me, that I ſhould not be an unhappy ſlave; and that one of my talents might depend upon an employment that would make my captivity very ſupportable.

I felt ſome joy at theſe words; but, flattering as they were, I had abundance of uneaſineſs on the ſcore of this occupation, with the promiſe of which the corſair regaled me. When we arrived at the port of Algier*, we ſaw a great number of people aſſembled to receive us, who, as ſoon we were landed, ſhouted with joy: beſides, the air reſounded with the confuſed noiſe of trumpets, Moreſco flutes, and other inſtruments uſed in that country, which formed a ſymphony more loud than agreeable. The cauſe of theſe rejoicings was a falſe report which had ſpread through the city, importing that the renegado Mehemet (this was our pirate's name) had periſhed in attacking a large Genoeſe veſſel; ſo that all his friends, informed of his return, were eager in their expreſſions of joy.

We had no ſooner ſet foot on ſhore, than I and my companions were conducted to the palace of Dey Solyman, where a Chriſtian ſecretary, examining us one by one, aſked our names, ages, country, religion, and qualifications. Then Mehemet, ſhowing me to the Dey,

* Algier, a city on the coaſt of Barbary, poſſeſſed by the Moors, who are at perpetual war with the Spaniards, and under the protection of the Turks.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Vol. 1.st B. 5. Chap. 1.st



Ansell delin. Skelton Sculp.

Digitized by Google

Dey, extolled my voice, and assured him, that I played ravishingly on the guitarre. This was enough to determine Solyman to choose me for his own service: accordingly I was detained in his seraglio, while the other captives were led into a publick place, and sold according to custom. What Mehemet had foretold to me in the vessel came to pass.—My condition was very happy; far from being abandoned to jailers, or employed in laborious work, I was, by order of Solyman, disposed of in a particular place, with five or six slaves of quality, who expected every moment to be redeemed, and whose tasks were far from being painful. My business was to water the orange trees and flowers in the garden, and I could not have been favoured with a more agreeable occupation.

Solyman was a man about forty years of age, well-shaped, very polite, and, for a Turk, mighty gallant. His chief favourite was a Cachemirian* woman, who by her understanding and beauty, had acquired an absolute dominion over him. He loved her even to adoration, and treated her every day with some entertainment or other; sometimes with a concert of vocal and instrumental music, and sometimes with a comedy in the Turkish taste; that is to say, a dramatick poem, in which modesty and decorum were as little

* Cachemire is a country under the dominion of the Great Mogul, called the Indian Paradise; remarkable for the beauty and wit of its women.

Digitized by Google

regarded as the rules of Ariſtotle. The favourite, whoſe name was Farrukhnaz, was paſſionately fond of theſe diverſions, and even made her women ſometimes repreſent Arabian pieces before the Dey; wherein ſhe herſelf played a part, and charmed all the ſpectators by the grace and vivacity of her action. I being one day among the muſicians, at a repreſentation of this kind, Solyman ordered me to play upon the guitarre, and ſing alone, between the acts. I had the good fortune to pleaſe, was very much applauded, and the favourite ſeemed to look upon me with a favourable eye.

The very next day, while I was buſied in watering the orange-trees in the garden, an eunuch paſſing by me, without ſtopping or ſpeaking one word, dropped a billet at my feet: I took it up in a confuſion made up of fear and joy. I lay down upon the ground, that I might not be ſeen from the windows of the ſeraglio, and concealing myſelf behind the boxes in which the orange-trees were planted, opened the letter, in which I found a pretty valuable diamond, and theſe words in good Caſtilian:

"YOUNG Chriſtian, thank heaven for thy captivity—Love and fortune will make thee happy—Love, if thou art ſenſible to the charms of a beautiful woman: and fortune, if thou haſt courage to deſpiſe the greateſt danger."

I did

Digitized by Google

I did not in the leaſt doubt that the letter came from the favourite Sultana: the ſtyle and diamond perſuaded me that ſhe muſt have been the author. Beſides that I am not naturally very timorous, the vanity of being in the good graces of a Grand Signor's miſtreſs, and more than that, the hope of getting from her four times as much money as would be neceſſary for my ranſom, made me form the deſign of atcheiving that adventure, whatever dangers might attend it. I continued my work, muſing upon the means of entering the apartment of Farrukhnaz, or rather expecting that ſhe would pave the way; for I concluded that ſhe would not ſtop there, but at leaſt be at more than half the trouble. I was not miſtaken: the ſame eunuch that paſſed me before, repaſſed an hour after, and ſaid, "Chriſtian, haſt thou conſidered, and wilt thou have the boldneſs to follow me?"—I anſwered, "Yes." He replied, "Very well: heaven preſerve thee. Thou ſhalt ſee me again to-morrow morning." So ſaying, he retired.—Next day he appeared, accordingly, about eight in the morning, and beckoned me to him. I obeyed the ſignal. and he conducted me into a hall, where there was a large piece of linen, which another eunuch and he had brought thither, and which they were to carry to the Sultana, for the decoration of an Arabian piece that ſhe was preparing for the entertainment of the Dey.

Digitized by Google

The two eunuchs having ſpread out the cloth, laid me along within it, and at the hazard of my being ſuffocated, rolled it up again, with me in the middle: then, each taking one end of it, carried me thus, unqueſtioned into the bed-chamber of the fair Cachemirian, who had nobody with her but an old ſlave devoted to her pleaſure. When the two unrolled the cloth, Farrukhnaz, at ſight of me, broke forth into tranſports of joy, that well diſcovered the genius of women in that country.—Bold as I naturally was, I could not ſee myſelf tranſported, all of a ſudden, into the ſecret apartment of the women, without being ſeized with fear. The lady eaſily perceived it, and, in order to diſſipate my apprehenſion, ſaid, "Young man, fear nothing: Solyman is gone to his country-houſe, where he will remain all day; ſo that we may converſe together freely."

Encouraged by theſe words, I aſſumed a look that redoubled the favourite's joy. "I am pleaſed with your perſon (ſaid ſhe) and intend to ſoften the rigour of your ſlavery: I believe you worthy of the ſentiments I have conceived for you; for though you are in the dreſs of a ſlave, you have a noble and gallant air, that ſhows you are not of the vulgar. Speak freely, and tell me who you are. I know that captives of a noble birth diſguiſe their rank, that they may be redeemed at an eaſier rate; but you have no occaſion to behave in that manner with me: I ſhould even be

Digitized by Google

be affronted at ſuch a precaution, ſince I promiſe to ſet you at liberty. Be ſincere therefore, and confeſs that you are a young man of a good family.—" Truely, madam (I replied) it would be ingratitude in me to repay your generoſity with diſſimulation; and ſince you abſolutely charge me to reveal my quality, you muſt be ſatisfied. I am the ſon of a Spaniſh grandee." Perhaps I ſpoke truth: at leaſt the Sultana believed it; and, pleaſed that ſhe had thrown her eyes upon a gentleman of importance, aſſured me that it ſhould not be her fault, if we did not ſee one another often in private. We had a pretty long converſation, and I never ſaw a more engaging woman: ſhe underſtood ſeveral languages, eſpecially the Caſtilian, which ſhe ſpoke pretty well. When ſhe judged it time for us to part, I went, by her order, into an oſier baſket, covered with a flowered ſilk, the work of her own hand. Then the two ſlaves who brought me in were called, and carried me out as a preſent from the favourite to the Dey: a thing ſacred to all the men who are entruſted with the guard of the women.

Farrukhnaz and I found other means of ſeeing one another, and that amiable captive inſpired me with almoſt as much love for her as ſhe had for me. Our intelligence remained ſecret during two months, although it is very difficult in a ſeraglio to conceal the myſteries of love ſo long from the Arguſes that watch it. But an unlucky accident diſcon-

Digitized by Google

certed our ſmall affairs, and my fortune was entirely changed. One day, when I had been introduced to the Sultana in the body of an artificial dragon, that was made for a ſhow, and was converſing with her, Solyman, who I imagined was buſy in the country, interrupted us, and entered ſo haſtily into the apartment of his favourite, that the old ſlave ſcarce had time to advertiſe us of his arrival; conſequently I had no leiſure to conceal myſelf, and therefore was the firſt object that preſented itſelf to the view of the Dey.

He ſeemed aſtoniſhed at the ſight of me, and his eyes kindled with fury. I looked upon myſelf as one that touched his laſt moment, and already imagined myſelf under the torture. As for Farrukhnaz, I perceived that ſhe was terrified indeed: but, inſtead of owning her crime, and aſking pardon, ſhe ſaid to Solyman, "Signor, before you pronounce my ſentence, deign to hear my defence: appearances doubtleſs condemn me, and I ſeem to have committed a piece of treaſon worthy of the moſt horrible chaſtiſement. I have brought this young captive hither, and, in order to introduce him into my apartment, have uſed the ſame artifice which I would have employed, if I had entertained a violent paſſion for him. Nevertheleſs, I take our holy prophet to witneſs, that, notwithſtanding this conduct, I am not unfaithful. I had a mind to converſe with this Chriſtian ſlave, in order to detach him from his ſect, and engage him to

Digitized by Google

to follow that of the believers. I have found in him ſuch a reſiſtance as I expected; but, however, I have conquered his prejudice, and he has promiſed to embrace Mahometaniſm."

I own, I ought to have contradicted the favourite, without any regard to the dangerous conjuncture in which I was: but being in the utmoſt dejection of ſpirit, affected with the danger in which I ſaw a woman whom I loved, and trembling for myſelf, I remained ſpeechleſs and confuſed: I could not utter one word, and the Dey, perſuaded by my ſilence that his miſtreſs ſaid nothing but the truth, was appeaſed. "Madam (ſaid he) I am willing to believe that you have not injured me, and that a deſire of doing a thing agreeable to the prophet has engaged you to hazard ſuch a delicate action. I forgive your imprudence, therefore, provided this captive takes the turban immediately." He ſent for a Marabou* that inſtant; I was clothed with a Turkiſh dreſs, and did all that was required, without having power to reſiſt. Or rather, I was ignorant of what I did, ſo much were my ſenſes diſordered. How many Chriſtians are there, who would not have been as baſe as I was on ſuch an occaſion?

After the ceremony, I quitted the ſeraglio, under the name of Sidy Hali, to exerciſe a ſmall employment beſtowed upon me by Soliman. I never ſaw the Sultana again; but one of her eunuchs, coming to me one day, brought

* Marabous are Mahometan prieſts.

Digitized by Google

brought from her a preſent of jewels worth two thouſand ſultanins of gold, with a billet in which the lady aſſured me, that ſhe would never forget my generous complaiſance, in ſuffering myſelf to be made a Mahometan in order to ſave her life. Truly, beſides the preſents I received from Farrukhnaz, I obtained through her an employment more conſiderable than the firſt, and in leſs than ſeven years, became one of the richeſt renegadoes in the city of Algier.

You may well believe that if I aſſiſted at the prayers which the Muſſulmen put up in their moſques, and fulfilled the other duties of their religion, it was only out of pure grimace. I preſerved a determined reſolution to re-enter into the boſom of the church; and, for that purpoſe, to withdraw one day into Spain or Italy with the riches which I ſhould amaſs. In the mean time I lived very agreeably; was lodged in a fine houſe, had ſuperb gardens, a great number of ſlaves, and very handſome women in my ſeraglio. Though the uſe of wine is forbid in that country to Mahometans, they do not fail for the moſt part, to drink it in private. As for my own part, I drank it without ceremony, as almoſt all renegadoes do. I remember I had two companions with whom I often committed a debauch within the night. One was a Jew, the other an Arabian, and both as I imagined, honeſt men; ſo that I lived with them in the greateſt familiarity. One evening, I invited

Digitized by Google

invited them to ſupper, and a dog, of which I was paſſionately fond, having died that day, we bathed his body, and buried it with all the ceremony that is obſerved at the funerals of the Mahometans. In ſo doing we had no intention to ridicule the Muſſulman religion, but only to amuſe ourſelves, and gratify a fooliſh whim that ſeized us in the middle of our debauch, to render the laſt duties to my dog.

This action, however, had well nigh ruined me. Next day a man came to my houſe, and ſaid, "Signor Sidy Hali, I am come hither on an important affair. The Cady* wants to ſpeak with you: take the trouble, if you pleaſe, to go to his houſe immediately: an Arabian merchant, who ſupped with you laſt night, has informed him of a certain impiety committed by you, with regard to a dog which you buried. For this reaſon I ſummon you to appear this day before that judge, otherwiſe I give you notice that you will be proceeded againſt in a criminal manner." So ſaying, he went away, leaving me thunderſtruck with this citation. The Arabian had no cauſe to complain of me, and I could not comprehend the traitor's reaſon for playing me this trick. Nevertheleſs, the thing was not to be neglected. I knew the Cady was a man ſevere in appearance, but not at all ſcrupulous at bottom: ſo I put two hundred ſultanins of gold into my purſe, and repaired

* The Cady is the civil magiſtrate in every town in Turkey.

Digitized by Google

paired to his houſe. He carried me into his cloſet, and ſaid, with a ſtern look, "You are an impious, ſacrilegious, and abominable man: you have interred a dog like a Muſſulman: what horrid profanation! Is it thus then you regard our moſt ſacred ceremonies? and did you become a Mahometan only to make a jeſt of our worſhip?—" Mr. Cady (I replied) the Arabian who has made ſuch a malicious report of me, that falſe friend, is an accomplice of my crime, if it be a crime to grant the honours of burial to a faithful domeſtick—an animal that poſſeſſed a thouſand good qualities. He loved people of merit and diſtinction ſo much, that even in his laſt moments, as a teſtimony of his friendſhip, he has left them his whole fortune by a will, of which I am the ſole executor. He bequeaths twenty crowns to one, thirty to another; and, Sir, he has not forgot you (added I, taking out my purſe) here are two hundred ſultanins of gold which he charged me to give you." The Cady, loſing his gravity at this diſcourſe, could not help laughing, and, as we were alone, took the purſe without ceremony, ſaying, while he diſmiſſed me, "Go, Signor Sidy Hali; you have done well to inter with pomp and honour a dog who had ſo much conſideration for perſons of worth."

By theſe means I extricated myſelf out of this affair, which, if it did not make me more wiſe, rendered me at leaſt more circumſpect for the future. I no longer drank with the Arabian

Digitized by Google

Arabian, nor even with the Jew; but choſe for a companion at my cups a young gentleman of Leghorn, called Azarini, who was my own ſlave. I was not like the reſt of the renegadoes, who are generally more cruel to ſlaves than the Turks themſelves; all my captives waited very patiently for their redemption; and indeed I treated them ſo gently, that ſometimes they told me, they were more afraid of changing their maſter, than deſirous of liberty, whatever charms it has for people in a ſtate of bondage.

One day the Dey's veſſels returned with conſiderable prizes, bringing in more than an hundred ſlaves of both ſexes, whom they had taken on the coaſts of Spain. Solyman kept but a very ſmall number, and the reſt were expoſed to ſale: I arrived in the market-place, and bought a Spaniſh girl, about ten or twelve years old, who wept bitterly, and ſeemed in deſpair. I was ſurpriſed to ſee one of her age ſo ſenſible of captivity; and bid her, in Caſtilian, moderate her affliction, aſſuring her that ſhe had fallen into the hands of a maſter who did not want humanity though he wore a turban. The young creature, whoſe mind was ſtill engroſſed by her ſorrow, did not hear what I ſaid: ſhe did nothing but ſob, complain of her fate, and, from time to time, cry with a piteous accent, "O my mother! why are we ſeperated? I ſhould have patience were we together." In pronouncing theſe words, ſhe turned her eyes towards a woman between forty

Digitized by Google

forty and fifty years of age, who ſtood a few paces from her, and, with a downcaſt look, waited in ſullen ſilence until ſomebody ſhould purchaſe her. I aſked the young girl, if the perſon ſhe looked at was her mother? "Yes, alas! Signor (ſhe replied) in the name of God, do not part us."—"Well, my child (ſaid I) if it is neceſſary for your conſolation that you ſhould be together, you ſhall ſoon be ſatisfied." At the ſame time I approached the mother, in order to bid for her: but I no ſooner beheld her face than I recollected, with all the emotion you can imagine, the features, the indivual countenance of Lucinda! "Juſt heaven! (ſaid I to myſelf) 'tis my own mother! 'tis doubtleſs ſhe herſelf!" As for her, whether the deep affliction occaſioned by her misfortunes made all the objects that ſurrounded her appear to her as enemies, or that my dreſs diſguiſed me, or rather that I was much altered in twelve years, during which ſhe had not ſeen me, I know not, but ſhe did not at all remember me.

Having bought her alſo, I carried them both to my houſe, where, deſigning to give them the pleaſure of knowing who I was, "Madam (ſaid I to Lucinda) is it poſſible that my features do not ſtrike you? Have my whiſkers and turban diſguiſed me ſo much, that you do not know your ſon Raphael!" My mother ſtarting at theſe words, conſidered my countenance, recollected me, and we embraced one another with great tenderneſs.

I then

Digitized by Google

I then embraced her daughter, who perhaps knew no more of having a brother, than I of having a ſiſter. "Confeſs (ſaid I to my mother) that in all your theatrical pieces, you have not a recognition ſo original as this." "Son (anſwered ſhe ſighing) I was at firſt rejoiced to ſee you again, but now my joy is converted into grief. In what a ſituation, alas! do I find you! My ſlavery gives me a thouſand times leſs pain than that odious dreſs." "In good faith, madam (ſaid I, interrupting her with a laugh) I admire your delicacy, which to be ſure is very commendable in an actreſs. Why, good God! mother, you muſt be greatly altered if my metamorphoſis offends you ſo much: inſtead of finding fault with my turban, look upon me rather as an actor who plays the part of Turk upon the ſtage. Though I am renegado, I am no more a Muſſulman now than when I was in Spain; and at bottom I feel myſelf ſtill attached to my religion: when you ſhall know the adventures that have happened to me in this country, you will excuſe my conduct. Love was my crime, and I ſacrifice to that deity: I am ſomewhat of your diſpoſition, I aſſure you. There is ſtill another reaſon (added I) which ought to moderate your diſpleaſure in ſeeing me thus ſituated. You expected to ſuffer in Algier a rigorous captivity; and you find in your maſter a ſon, tender, reſpectful, and rich enough to maintain you here in abundance, until we can lay hold of an occaſion

Digitized by Google

ſion of returning certainly into Spain. So that you muſt allow that proverb to be true, which ſays, "It is an ill wind that blows no body good."

"Son (ſaid Lucinda to me) ſince you deſign to repaſs one day into your own country, and there abjure the religion of Mahomet, I am comforted. Thank heaven! (continued ſhe) that I ſhall be able to carry back your ſiſter Beatrice ſafe and ſound, into Caſtille." "Yes, madam (cried I) you ſhall have it in your power: we will go all three together as ſoon as poſſible, and rejoin the reſt of our family; for I ſuppoſe you have more marks of your fruitfulneſs in Spain."—"No! (ſaid my mother) I have no other children than you two, and you muſt know that Beatrice is the fruit of lawful wedlock."—"Why (I reſumed) did you give my little ſiſter that advantage over me? How could you reſolve to marry? I have heard you ſay an hundred times, during my childhood, that you could not forgive a handſome woman for taking a huſband."—Every ſeaſon has its reaſon, my ſon, (ſhe replied) men of the moſt firm reſolution are apt to change; and would you have a woman be more conſtant? I will (added ſhe) recount my hiſtory after you left Madrid." Then ſhe made the following narration, which, as it is curious, I will favour you with.

"If you remember it (ſaid my mother) you quitted young Leganez about thirteen years ago:

Digitized by Google

ago: at that time the Duke of Medina Celi told me, that he would come and ſup with me in private one evening: he appointed the day, when I waited for that nobleman, who came accordingly, and I had the good fortune to pleaſe him. He demanded the ſacrifice of all the rivals he might have: I granted his requeſt, in hopes of being well paid for my condeſcenſion; and my hopes were not diſappointed: for, the very next day I received from him conſiderable preſents, which were followed by many more, during the courſe of our correſpondence. I was afraid that I ſhould not be able to detain a man of ſuch high rank a long time in my fetters; and this I dreaded the more, becauſe I knew very well that he had eſcaped from celebrated beauties, whoſe chains he had broke almoſt as ſoon as he had bore them. Nevertheleſs, far from being every day leſs and leſs pleaſed with my favours, his raptures ſeemed rather to increaſe: in ſhort, I had the art to amuſe him, and hinder his heart, naturally inconſtant, from giving way to its uſual levity.

"He had been attached to me already three months, and I had room to flatter myſelf that his paſſion would be of long duration; when one of my ſhe-friends and I went to an aſſembly, where he happened to be with his ducheſs, in order to hear a concert of vocal and inſtrumental muſic. We chanced to place ourſelves pretty near the ducheſs, who was pleaſed to take it amiſs that I ſhould preſume

to

Digitized by Google

to appear in a place where ſhe was, and ſent a meſſage to me by one of her women, deſiring that I would immediately withdraw. I returned an inſolent anſwer, which incenſed the ducheſs ſo much, that ſhe complained of it to her huſband, who came to me in perſon, and ſaid, "Retire, Lucinda; though noblemen of my rank attach themſelves to ſuch little creatures as you, they muſt not forget themſelves altogether: if we love you more than our wives, we honour our wives more than you; and as often as you have the inſolence to put yourſelves in competition with them, you will always have the mortification to be treated with indignity.

"Luckily for me, the Duke ſpoke this in a tone of voice ſo low, that not one word was overheard by the people around us. I withdrew, covered with ſhame, and wept with vexation for the affront I had received. To crown my confuſion, the actors and actreſſes got notice of the adventure that very evening: one would think theſe people entertain a dæmon, who delights in reporting to one whatever happens to another. If an actor, for example, is guilty of ſome extravagant action in a debauch, or an actreſs enters into articles with a rich gallant, the company is immediately informed of the circumſtance. All my comrades, therefore, knew what happened at the concert, and God knows how they rejoiced at my expence. A ſpirit of charity, which reigns among them, uſually manifeſts

Digitized by Google

nifeſts itſelf on theſe occaſions. I put myſelf, however, above their tittle-tattle, and conſoled myſelf for the loſs of the Duke de Medina Celi, for he viſited me no more; and I learned a few days after, that a Carthuſian nun had made a conqueſt of him.

"When a lady, belonging to the theatre has the good fortune to be in vogue, ſhe cannot want lovers; and the paſſion of a grandee, though it does not laſt above three days, greatly enhances her price. I found myſelf beſieged with adorers, as ſoon as it was known in Madrid that the Duke had forſaken me. Thoſe rivals whom I had ſacrificed to him, more captivated by my charms than ever, returned in crowds, as candidates for my favour: I received homage from a thouſand other hearts, and was never ſo much in faſhion before. Of all the men who courted my graces, a fat Germán, gentleman to the Duke D'Oſſuna, ſeemed the moſt eager. He had not a very amiable perſon, but attracted my attention by a thouſand piſtoles, which he had amaſſed in the ſervice of his maſter, and which he ſquandered away, in order to be deemed worthy of being in the liſt of my happy gallants. As long as this worthy admirer, whoſe name was Brutandorf, had money to ſpend, I gave him a favourable reception; but, when he was ruined he found my door always ſhut againſt him. This proceeding of mine diſpleaſed him, and he came to ſearch for me at the theatre, during the play. He found me behind

Digitized by Google

behind the ſcenes, and began to reproach me for my ingratitude. I laughed in his face, at which he was enraged, and gave me a box on the ear, like a blunt German as he was: I ſhrieked aloud, interrupted the repreſentation, appeared upon the ſtage, and, addreſſing myſelf to the Duke D'Oſſuna, who was preſent with the Ducheſs his lady, demanded juſtice for the German behaviour of his gentleman. The Duke ordered us to go on with the play, and ſaid he would hear the parties when we had finiſhed the piece. As ſoon as it was over, I preſented myſelf, in a good deal of emotion, before the Duke, and ſignified my grievance in a pathetick manner: as for the German, he employed but a few words in his defence; he ſaid, 'That, far from repenting what he had done, he would do it again on the ſame provocation.' Both parties being heard, the Duke D'Oſſuna ſaid to my adverſary, 'Brutandorf, I diſmiſs you from my ſervice; let me never ſee your face again: not that I mind your having ſtruck an actreſs, but am offended at your want of reſpect to your maſter and miſtreſs, by preſuming to diſturb the entertainment in their preſence.'

"This ſentence I could not digeſt: I was mortally piqued, becauſe the German had not been turned away on account of his inſolence to me: I imagined that ſuch an affront put upon an actreſs ought to have been as ſeverely puniſhed as petty treaſon, and I had laid my account with ſeeing the gentleman undergo

Digitized by Google

undergo ſome terrible infliction. This diſagreeable event undeceived, and convinced me, that the world always makes a diſtinction between the players and the characters they repreſent. I was, for this reaſon, diſguſted with the ſtage, which I reſolved to abandon, and go to live at a great diſtance from Madrid. I accordingly choſe the city of Valencia for the place of my retreat, and thither I repaired incognito, with the value of twenty thouſand ducats, in jewels and caſh: a fortune, as I thought, ſufficient to maintain me during the reſt of my days, ſince I deſigned to lead a very retired life. I took a ſmall houſe at Valencia, and had no other domeſticks than a maid-ſervant and a page, to whom I was as little known as to the whole city. I pretended to be a widow of an officer of the king's houſehold; and ſaid, I came to ſettle at Valencia, becauſe it had the reputation of being one of the moſt agreeable places in Spain. I ſaw but very little company, and obſerved ſuch a regular conduct, that I was never ſuſpected of having been an actreſs. In ſpite of my care, however, to keep myſelf concealed, I attracted the notice of a gentleman, who had a country-houſe near Paterna. He was a very well-made cavalier, between thirty-five and forty years of age, but withal a nobleman very much in debt; which is no great rarity in the kingdom of Valencia, more than in other countries.

Digitized by Google

" This Signor Hidalgo *, finding my perſon to his liking, wanted to know if I could anſwer his purpoſe in other reſpects: for this end, he uncoupled his ſpies, to make diſcoveries, and had the pleaſure to learn from their report, that, beſides ſome ſhare of beauty, I was a widow of good fortune. He looked upon me, therefore, as a ſuitable match, and, in a little time, an honeſt old gentlewoman came to my houſe, and told me, from him, that; being equally charmed with my beauty and virtue, he made a tender of his heart, and was ready to conduct me to the altar, as ſoon as I would favour him with my hand. I aſked three days to deliberate upon his propoſal, and inform myſelf of his character; which was ſo engaging, that although I was not ignorant of his ſituation, I eaſily determined to marry him in a ſhort time after.

Don Manuel de Xercia (ſo was my huſband called) carried me immediately to his caſtle, that had a very antique air, of which he was not a little vain. He pretended that one of his anceſtors had cauſed it to be built; and from thence concluded that there was not a more ancient houſe in Spain than that of Xercia. But this title of nobility, fair as it was, had like to have been deſtroyed by time; for the caſtle, which they were obliged to prop up in ſeveral parts, threatened immediate ruin. How happy, therefore, was Don Manuel in mar-

* Hidalgo (in Spaniſh) is a gentleman; literally ſomebody's ſon, in contradiſtinction to thoſe who are the ſons of nobody.

Digitized by Google

marrying me! more than half my money was employed in reparations; and the reſt ſerved to put us in a condition of making a figure in the country. Behold me then (to uſe the expreſſion) in a new world, changed into the nymph of a caſtle, and lady of a pariſh. Here was a metamorpoſis! and I was too good an actreſs, not to ſupport, with dignity, the ſplendour with which I was inveſted by my rank. I aſſumed lofty theatrical airs, which made the village conceive an high idea of my birth. How merry would they have been at my expence, had they known the truth of the matter! the nobility in the neighbourhood would have beſtowed upon me a thouſand taunts, and the peaſants abated a great deal of the reſpect they ſhowed me.

I had lived happily near ſix years with Don Manuel, when he died, leaving my affairs in great perplexity, with your ſiſter Beatrice, then going in her fifth year. The caſtle, which was all the eſtate we had, was unluckily engaged to ſeveral creditors, the chief of whom was one Bernard Aſtuto *, whoſe name ſeemed very well adapted to his character: he practiſed at Valencia the buſineſs of an attorney, which he exerciſed with conſummate ſkill, having ſtudied the law, in order to qualify himſelf for cheating with the greateſt dexterity. What a terrible creditor he was! a caſtle under the claws of ſuch an attorney is like a pigeon in the talons of a kite. Accordingly,

* Aſtuto is a Spaniſh word ſignifying craft or cunning.

Digitized by Google

Signor Aſtuto, as ſoon as he underſtood the death of my huſband, did not fail to beſiege the caſtle, which he would undoubtedly have blown up by the mines which chicanery began to prepare, had not my good genius interpoſed, and ordered it ſo, as that my beſieger became my ſlave. I had the good fortune to captivate him, during an interview we had on the ſubject of the law-ſuit. I ſpared nothing, I own, to inſpire him with a paſſion for me: the deſire of ſaving my land made me practiſe upon him all thoſe languiſhing airs which had often ſucceeded ſo well. Notwithſtanding all my art, I was afraid of being baffled by the attorney, who was ſo ingulphed in buſineſs, that he did not ſeem ſuſceptible of an amorous impreſſion. Nevertheleſs, this ſullen aukward ſcrawler took more pleaſure in looking at me than I imagined. "Madam (ſaid he) I know not how to make love: I have already applied to my profeſſion ſo cloſely as to neglect the methods and cuſtoms of gallantry; but, however, I am not ignorant of the eſſential part; and, therefore, to come to the point, I aſſure you, that if you will give me your hand, we will burn the whole proceedings; I will bubble the other creditors who join in the ſuit againſt you: you ſhall enjoy the life-rent, and your daughter the property of the land." My own intereſt, and that of Beatrice, did not permit me to heſitate; I accepted the propoſal, and the attorney kept his promiſe. He turned his arms

Digitized by Google

arms againſt the reſt of the creditors, and ſecured me in the poſſeſſion of my caſtle; and this, perhaps, was the firſt time of his having befriended the widow and the orphan.

I became, therefore, an attorney's wife, without ceaſing to be lady of the pariſh. But this new marriage coſt me the eſteem of the gentry in Valencia. The women of faſhion looked upon me as one who had degenerated, and therefore would not viſit me; ſo that I was obliged to confine myſelf to an acquaintance among citizens: a circumſtance that gave me ſome uneaſineſs at firſt; becauſe I had been for ſix years accuſtomed to correſpond with none but ladies of diſtinction: but I ſoon conſoled myſelf, and became acquainted with the wives of a ſcrivener and two attornies, whoſe characters were pleaſant enough; there was ſomething ridiculous in their behaviour, that diverted me very much. Theſe ſmall gentry believed themſelves ladies of ſome conſideration. "Alas! (ſaid I, ſometimes to myſelf, when I ſaw them forget themſelves) this is the way of the world: every one thinks herſelf better than her neighbour. I imagined that actreſſes were the only people that did not know themſelves; but I find that citizens wives are not a whit more reaſonable. I wiſh, that by way of puniſhment, they were obliged to keep in their houſes the pictures of their grandfathers: in good faith, they would not place them in the moſt remarkable apartment."

Digitized by Google

"After having been married four years, Signor Bernardo Astuto fell sick, and died without children; so that, with what he had settled upon me at our marriage, and the money I was left in possession of, I found myself a rich widow, and had the reputation of being so. On this report, a Sicilian gentleman, whose name was Colifichini, resolved to attach himself to me, in order to ruin or espouse me, for he left me the choice. He had come from Palermo to see Spain, and after having satisfied his curiosity, waited (as he said) at Valencia, for an opportunity of repassing into Sicily. This gentleman was not more than five-and-twenty years of age, genteelly shaped, though small; in short, I liked his appearance. He found means to speak with me in private, and I will frankly own, that I became madly fond of him in our first interview. On his side, the little rogue seemed quite captivated by my charms; and I believe, God forgive me, we should have married one another immediately, had the attorney's death, which was still recent, permitted me to contract a new engagement so soon: but, ever since I had fallen into the state of matrimony, I maintained the punctilios of decorum.

"We agreed, therefore, to defer our marriage for some time, out of decency: in the mean time Colifichini continued his addresses, and his passion, far from abating, seemed to increase daily. The poor young man was not very well provided with cash: I perceived it, and

Digitized by Google

and he no longer wanted money: for, beſides that I was almoſt twice his age, I remembered that I had lain the men under contribution in my youth, and I looked upon what I now did as a reſtitution that acquitted my conſcience. We waited as patiently as we could for the expiration of the time preſcribed by cuſtom for women to remain in a ſtate of widowhood; and then went to the altar, where we mutually bound ourſelves in the indiſſoluble ties of wedlock: we afterwards retired to my caſtle, where, I may ſay, we lived two years, not ſo much like huſband and wife, as two tender lovers. But, alas! we were not deſtined to be long happy in one another; a fatal pleuriſy robbed me of my dear Colifichini."

Here I interrupted my mother, crying, "How! madam; your third huſband dead too! you muſt certainly be a very dangerous tenement."—"What could I do, ſon? (anſwered Lucinda.) Was it in my power to prolong the days that heaven had numbered? If I have loſt three huſbands, I could not help it. Two of them I regretted very much: he for whom I had the leaſt regard was the attorney: as I married him out of intereſt, I eaſily conſoled myſelf for his death. But (added ſhe) to return to Colifichini, I muſt tell you, that a few months after his deceaſe, having a mind to go and ſee, with my own eyes, a country-houſe near Palermo, which he had aſſigned to me as a jointure in our con-

Digitized by Google

tract of marriage, I embarked with my daughter for Sicily; but we were taken in our paſſage by the veſſels of the Dey of Algier, and conducted into this city. Happily for us you chanced to be on the ſpot where we were put up to ſale, otherwiſe we might have fallen into the hands of ſome barbarous maſter, who would have maltreated us, and under whom we might have paſſed our whole life in bondage, without your knowing any thing of the matter."

Such was my mother's narration; after which, gentlemen, I gave her the beſt apartment of my houſe, with the liberty of living as ſhe ſhould think proper; a permiſſion that ſhe reliſhed very much. She had contracted ſuch a habit of being in love, from the repeated attacks of that paſſion, that ſhe muſt abſolutely have either a huſband or a gallant. At firſt ſhe caſt her eyes on ſome of my ſlaves; but Haly Pegelin, a Greek renegado, who came frequently to the houſe, ſoon engroſſed her attention. She conceived a more violent paſſion for him than ever ſhe felt for Colifichini, and ſhe was ſo much miſtreſs of the art of pleaſing, that ſhe found the ſecret of charming him alſo. I winked at their intelligence, and thought of nothing then but my return into Spain. The Dey having already permitted me to fit out a veſſel, to cruiſe and commit piracy, I was buſied in making preparations; and, eight days before they were finiſhed, ſaid to Lucinda, "Madam, we ſhall depart


Digitized by Google

depart from Algier in a very little time, and loſe ſight of that place which you deteſt ſo much."

My mother grew pale at theſe words, and remained ſpeechleſs: at which being ſtrangely ſurpriſed; "What do I ſee, madam! (ſaid I) what is the meaning of that conſternation in your looks? You ſeem to be afflicted, rather than rejoiced at what I tell you! I thought I ſhould have made you happy with the news of every thing's being ready for our departure. Have you no longer any deſire then of repaſſing into Spain?"—"None at all, ſon (anſwered my mother) I have had ſo much affliction in that kingdom that I renounce it for ever."—"What do I hear! (cried I, in a tranſport of grief.) Ah! ſay rather, that love detaches you from it. O heavens! what a change is here! when you arrived in this city, every object that preſented itſelf was odious to your eyes; but Haly Pelegin has altered your diſpoſition."—"I don't deny it (replied Lucinda;) I love that renegade, whom I deſign to take for my fourth huſband."—"What an abandoned project! (ſaid I, interrupting her with horror) would you marry a Muſſulman? You forget that you are a Chriſtian; or rather, you never was one but in name. Ah! mother, what are you about to do? you have reſolved upon your own perdition, by voluntarily embracing that which I was compelled to do by neceſſity."

Digitized by Google

I uſed many more arguments to diſſuade her from her deſign; but I harangued to no purpoſe: ſhe had formed her reſolution; and not contented with following her own wicked inclination, and quitting me to live with that renegade, ſhe wanted to carry Beatrice along with her alſo; but this I oppoſed. "Ah, wretched Lucinda! (ſaid I to her) if nothing is able to reſtrain you, at leaſt abandon yourſelf only to the fury that poſſeſſes your imagination; do not drag a young innocent creature to the precipice from whence you intend to throw yourſelf." Lucinda went away without making any reply, and I believed that a remaining ray of reaſon enlightened and hindered her from being obſtinate in demanding her daughter. But how little was I acquainted with my mother! Two days after, one of my ſlaves ſaid to me, "Signor, take care of yourſelf; one of Pegelin's captives has imparted a thing to me, of which you cannot take the advantage too ſoon. Your mother has changed her religion, and to puniſh you, for having refuſed to let her carry off Beatrice, is reſolved to inform the Dey of your intended flight." I did not doubt one moment that Lucinda was capable of doing what my ſlave mentioned: I had opportunities of ſtudying the lady, and perceived, that, by the habit of acting ſanguinary parts in tragedies, ſhe was ſo familiariſed to guilt, that ſhe could have cauſed me to be burnt alive, and I believe, would have been no more affected with

Digitized by Google

with my death, than with the catastrophe of a dramatick performance.

Willing, therefore, not to neglect the advice of my slave, I hastened the embarkation, hired Turks, according to the custom of the corsairs of Algier, when they go on a cruise; but I hired no more than such as were necessary to keep me unsuspected, and set sail as soon as possible, with all my slaves, and my sister Beatrice. You may well believe that I did not forget to carry off, at the same time, all my jewels and money, which might amount to the value of six thousand ducats. When we got to sea we began by securing the Turks, whom we easily chained, because my slaves were more numerous than they; and we had such a favourable wind, that in a little time we made the coast of Italy, and arrived, without the least bad accident, in the harbour of Leghorn, where, I believe, the whole city crowded to see us come ashore. The father of my slave Azarini being among the spectators, by accident or curiosity, surveyed all the captives with great attention, as they disembarked; but though he sought among them the features of his son, he little expected to see him again. What transports and embraces were the consequence of their meeting, when they recollected one another!

As soon as Azarini had told his father who I was, and what brought me to Leghorn, the old man obliged me as well as Beatrice to lodge at his house. I shall pass over in silence

Digitized by Google

the detail of a thouſand things that I was obliged to perform in being re-admitted into the boſom of the church; and only obſerve, that I abjured Mahometaniſm much more heartily than I had embraced it. After having entirely purged myſelf of the gall of Algier, I ſold my veſſel and ſet all my ſlaves at liberty; as for the Turks, they were detained in priſon at Leghorn, in order to be exchanged for Chriſtians. I received the beſt of treatment from both the Azarinis, the younger of whom married my ſiſter Beatrice, who was indeed no bad match for him, being a gentleman's daughter, and heireſs of the caſtle of Xercia, which my mother had taken care to farm out to a rich peaſant of Paterna, when ſhe reſolved upon her paſſage into Sicily.

Having ſtayed ſome time at Leghorn, I ſet out for Florence, which I longed much to ſee; and whither I did not go without letters of recommendation. Azarini the father had friends at the Grand Duke's court, to whom he introduced me as a Spaniſh gentleman, his ally; and I prefixed Don to my name, imitating in that a great many Spaniſh plebeians, who, when they are out of their own country, aſſume that title of honour without ceremony. I boldly, therefore, called myſelf Don Raphael; and, as I had brought from Algier a ſufficiency to ſupport my dignity, appeared at court in a ſplendid manner. The gentleman to whom Azarini had wrote in my favour gave out that I was a perſon of quality; ſo

Digitized by Google

ſo that his teſtimony, together with the airs I aſſumed, made me eaſily paſs for a man of importance. I ſoon got acquainted with the principal noblemen, who preſented me to the Grand Duke, whom I had the good fortune to pleaſe: upon which, I bent my whole endeavour to make my court to that prince, and ſtudy his diſpoſition. I liſtened attentively to what the oldeſt courtiers ſaid to him; and by their diſcourſe diſcovered his inclinations. Among other things, I obſerved that he loved raillery, good ſtories, and ſallies of wit. I modelled myſelf accordingly; and every morning marked in my pocket-book the ſtories I deſigned for the day. I had ſuch a number of them in my memory, that my budget might be ſaid to have been full, and yet, in ſpite of all my management, it was emptied apace in ſuch a manner, that I ſhould either have been obliged to uſe repetition, or ſhow that I was at the end of my apophthegms; if my genius, fruitful in fiction, had not furniſhed me with abundance. But I compoſed tales of gallantry and humour, that were very entertaining to the Grand Duke; and as it often happens with profeſſed wits, in the morning I invented bright expreſſions, which I uttered as unpremeditated ſallies in the afternoon.

I even elevated myſelf into a poet, and conſecrated my muſe to the praiſe of the prince. I freely own indeed, that my verſe was none of the beſt, therefore not much criticiſed: but had it been better, I queſtion if it would have been

Digitized by Google

been better received by the Grand Duke, who seemed very well satisfied with my talents; the matter, perhaps, hindered him from finding fault. Be that as it will, this prince insensibly took such a liking to me, as gave umbrage to the courtiers. They endeavoured to discover who I was, but did not succeed. Getting notice, however, that I had been a renegade, they did not fail to inform the prince of it, in hopes of injuring my character. But this they could not accomplish; on the contrary, the Grand Duke one day obliged me to give him a faithful narration of my voyage to Algier; I obeyed, and my adventures, which I did not at all disguise, afforded him infinite pleasure.

"Don Raphael (said he, when I had finished the relation) I have a regard for you, and will give you a mark of it, which will not permit you to doubt of my friendship. I will make you the depository of my secrets; and to begin with an instance of my confidence, I must tell you that I am in love with the wife of one of my ministers. She is the most amiable lady of my court, but, at the same time, the most virtuous: shut up amidst her family, and solely attached to a husband whom she adores, she seems ignorant of the noise her charms make in Florence. Judge you if this must not be a difficult conquest. Nevertheless, this beauty, inaccessible as she is to lovers, has deigned sometimes to hear my sighs: I have found means to speak to her

in

Digitized by Google

in private, and acquaint her with the sentiments of my heart; but I do not flatter myself with the hope of having inspired her with mutual love: she has never given me cause to form such an agreeable idea: I do not, however, despair of pleasing her by my assiduity, and the mysterious conduct I shall take care to observe.

"My passion for that lady (added he) is known to nobody but herself: for, instead of consulting my inclination without constraint, and acting the sovereign, I conceal the knowledge of my flame from all the world. A piece of delicacy which I think I owe to Mascarini, the husband of her I love: his zeal, attachment, services, and probity, oblige me so conduct myself with great secrecy and circumspection. I would not plunge a dagger into the bosom of that unhappy husband, by declaring myself the lover of his wife; but wish that he may always remain ignorant, if possible, of the flame that consumes me; for I am persuaded that he would die of grief, if he knew the confidence I now repose in you. I conceal my steps, therefore, and am resolved to make use of you, in expressing to Lucretia all the pangs I suffer, by the constraint which she imposes upon me: you shall be the interpreter of my sentiments, and I do not at all doubt that you will acquit yourself of the commission to a miracle. Contract an acquaintance with Mascarini; endeavour to gain his friendship; insinuate yourself into his

Digitized by Google

his houſe, and procure the liberty of converſing with his wife. This is what I expect of you, and what I aſſure myſelf you will perform with all the diſcretion and addreſs that ſuch delicate employment requires."

I promiſed to do all that lay in my power, to juſtify the confidence he honoured me with, and contribute to the ſucceſs of his flame: and ſoon kept my word with him; I ſpared nothing to pleaſe Maſcarini, and accompliſhed my end with eaſe. Charmed to find his friendſhip courted by a man who was beloved of his prince, he met my advances half way: his houſe was open to me: I had free acceſs to his lady, and, I dare ſay, behaved myſelf ſo well, that he had not the leaſt ſuſpicion of the negociation entruſted to my care. It is true, indeed, for an Italian, he was not much addicted to jealouſy; he depended upon the virtue of Lucretia, and ſhutting himſelf up in his cloſet, left me frequently alone with her. I went roundly to work, the very firſt opportunity; entertained the lady with the paſſion of the Grand Duke, and told her, that my ſole deſign in coming to her houſe, was to talk to her of that prince. She did not ſeem captivated by him; and yet I perceived that her vanity hindered her from rejecting his addreſſes: ſhe took pleaſure in hearing them, without feeling any inclination to anſwer his deſires. She did not want underſtanding: but ſhe was a woman, and I obſerved that her virtue yielded inſenſibly to the ſuperb idea of

a ſo-

Digitized by Google

a ſovereign in her chains. In ſhort, the prince had reaſon to flatter himſelf, that without employing the violence of a Tarquin, he would ſee Lucretia ſubjected to his love. An accident, however, which he little expected, deſtroyed his hope, as you ſhall preſently hear.

I am naturally impudent among women, having acquired that qualification, I know not whether it be good or bad, among the Turks: Lucretia was handſome, and I, forgetting that I was only to act the part of an ambaſſador, talked to her on my own ſcore, offering my ſervices with all the gallantry I was maſter of. Inſtead of being ſhocked at my audaciouſneſs, and replying in a rage, ſhe ſaid, with a ſmile, "You muſt own, Don Raphael, that the Grand Duke has made choice of a very faithful and zealous miniſter, who ſerves him with an integrity never enough to be commended." "Madam (ſaid I, with the ſame air) don't let us examine things ſcrupulouſly; but lay aſide thoſe reflections, which I know very well are not at all favourable to me. I abandon myſelf to my paſſion; and, after all, do not believe myſelf the firſt confident of a prince, who has betrayed his maſter in affairs of gallantry; for the great have often dangerous rivals in their meſſengers of pleaſure."—"That may be (replied Lucretia) but as for my part, I am ſo high-ſpirited, that nobody under the degree of a prince ſhall ever make an impreſſion upon my heart. Conduct yourſelf accordingly (added ſhe, growing ſerious) and

Digitized by Google

and let us change the diſcourſe. I am willing to forget what you have ſaid, on condition that you ſhall never talk to me again in the ſame manner; otherwiſe you may chance to repent it."

Although this was an advice to the reader, of which I ought to have taken the advantage, I did not leave off entertaining Maſcarini's wife with my paſſion: I even preſſed her with more ardour than ever, to make ſuitable returns to my tenderneſs, and was raſh enough to take liberties. Upon which the lady being affronted at my diſcourſe and Muſſulman behaviour, checked me abruptly, threatened to make the Grand Duke acquainted with my inſolence, and aſſured me, that ſhe would deſire him to puniſh me as I deſerved. I was piqued in my turn at theſe menaces: my love changed into hate; and determined to be revenged upon Lucretia for her contempt. I went in queſt of her huſband, whom, after he had ſworn that he would not expoſe me, I informed of the correſpondence between his wife and the prince, not forgetting to paint her very amorous, in order to make the ſcene more intereſting. The miniſter, to prevent all accidents, ſhut up his ſpouſe, without any other form of proceſs, in a ſecret apartment, where ſhe was guarded by people on whom he could rely. While ſhe was thus ſurrounded by ſpies, who hindered her from informing the Grand Duke of her ſituation, I told that prince, with a melancholy air, that he muſt no

Digitized by Google

no more think of Lucretia; that Mascarini, had, doubtless, discovered the whole affair, since he had taken it into his head to watch his wife; that I could not imagine what had alarmed his suspicion of me, for I thought I had always behaved with a good deal of address; that the lady, perhaps, had confessed the whole to her husband, in concert with whom she had allowed herself to be locked up, in order to avoid those importunities which alarmed her virtue. The prince seemed very much afflicted at my report; I was touched with his grief, and repented more than once of what I had done: but it was too late: besides, I confess that I felt a malicious joy, when I represented to myself the condition to which I had reduced the proud woman who had disdained my passion.

I enjoyed with impunity the pleasure of revenge, which is so sweet to all the world, and in particular to Spaniards, when the Grand Duke being one day in company with five or six of his courtiers and me, said, "In what manner do you think a man ought to be punished, who has dared to abuse the confidence of his prince, and attempted to deprive him of his mistress?"—He ought (said one) to be tied to the tail of four horses, and torn to pieces." Another was of opinion that he should be mawled to death. The least cruel of those Italians, and he whose sentence was most favourable to the delinquent, said, "That he would be satisfied with causing him to be thrown

Digitized by Google

thrown from the top of a high tower."—"And what is the opinion of Don Raphael? (reſumed the Grand Duke) I am perſuaded that the Spaniards are as ſevere as the Italians in ſuch conjunctures."

I eaſily comprehended, as you may believe, that Maſcarini had not kept his oath; or that his wife had found means to appriſe the prince of what had paſſed between her and me; and my confuſion appeared plain on my countenance. Nevertheleſs, diſconcerted as I was, I anſwered with a reſolute tone. "Sir, the Spaniards are more generous: they would pardon the confident on ſuch an occaſion, and, by their goodneſs, raiſe in his ſoul an eternal regret for having betrayed them." "Well (ſaid the prince) I find myſelf capable of ſuch generoſity. I pardon the traitor: for I have none but myſelf to blame for having beſtowed my confidence upon a man whom I did not know, and whom I had reaſon to diſtruſt, after what I had heard of his character. Don Raphael (added he) this is the manner in which I avenge myſelf: quit my dominions immediately, and let me never ſee your face again." I withdrew on the inſtant, not ſo much afflicted at my diſgrace, as rejoiced at coming off ſo cheaply: and the very next day embarked in a veſſel that ſailed from Leghorn, on its return to Barcelona."

I interrupted Don Raphael in this part of his hiſtory, by ſaying, "For a man of underſtanding, methinks you committed a great blunder

Digitized by Google

blunder in neglecting to leave Florence, immediately after the diſcovery you made to Maſcarini of the prince's paſſion for Lucretia; you ſhould have concluded that the Grand Duke would ſoon come to the knowledge of your infidelity."—"I grant it (replied the ſon of Lucinda) and notwithſtanding the aſſurance which the miniſter gave me, of not expoſing me to the reſentment of the prince, I propoſed to diſappear in a very ſhort time.

I arrived at Barcelona (continued he) with the remainder of the wealth I had brought from Algier, the beſt part of which I had diſſipated at Florence, in the character of the Spaniſh gentleman. I did not ſtay long in Catalonia: for, having a longing deſire to reviſit Madrid, the charming place of my nativity, I ſatisfied, as ſoon as poſſible, the deſire that impelled me. When I arrived in that city, I took furniſhed lodgings, by accident, at a houſe where a lady lived, whoſe name was Camilla, and who, though no minor, was a very engaging creature. I take Signor Gil Blas to witneſs, who ſaw her, much about that time, at Valladolid. She had ſtill more wit than beauty, and never had a ſhe-adventurer better talents for decoying dupes: but ſhe was none of thoſe coquets, who lay up the acknowledgments of their gallants: when ſhe had pillaged a man of buſineſs, ſhe ſhared his ſpoils with the firſt ſharper ſhe found to her liking.

We

Digitized by Google

We loved one another at firſt ſight: and the conformity of our manners joined us ſo cloſely, that we ſoon had every thing in common. Our fortunes, indeed, were not very conſiderable, and therefore we ſpent them in a very little time. Neither of us, unluckily, minded any thing but our pleaſure, or made the leaſt uſe of the talents we had to live at our neighbour's expence. But miſery at laſt awakened our geniuſes, which pleaſure had benumbed: and Camilla ſaid to me, "My dear Raphael, let us make a diverſion, my friend, and renounce a fidelity that ruins us both: you may captivate a rich widow, and I may charm ſome nobleman: for if we continue faithful to one another, here will be two fortunes loſt."—"Fair Camilla (I replied) you have anticipated me; I was going to make the ſame propoſal to you. I aſſent to your ſcheme, my queen: yes, for the better ſupport of our mutual flame, let us attempt advantageous conqueſts: the infidelities we ſhall commit will turn to triumphs in the end."

This convention being made, we took the field, and made conſiderable motions at firſt, without being able to encounter what we ſought: Camilla could light upon none but beaux; that is to ſay, gallants who had not a penny in their pockets: and I could meet with no women, but ſuch as loved better to levy contributions than to pay them. As our arts were uſeleſs in love, we had recourſe to ſtratagems,

Digitized by Google

ſtratagems, and performed ſo many, that our fame reached the ears of the corregidor, and that ſevere judge for the devil, ordered one of his algauzils to apprehend us; but this officer, being as good natured as the other was cruel, gave us time to quit Madrid, in conſideration of a ſmall ſum which we beſtowed upon him. We took the road to Valladolid, and fixed in that city, having hired a houſe, in which I lived with Camilla, who paſſed for my ſiſter, to avoid ſcandal. At firſt we kept our induſtry under the rein, and began to ſtudy the ground, before we ſhould form any enterpriſe.

One day a man accoſting me in the ſtreet ſaluted me very civilly, ſaying "Signor Don Raphael, do you know me?" I anſwered, "No." Upon which he reſumed: "But I recollect you: I have ſeen you at the court of Tuſcany, where I then belonged to the Grand Duke's guards. I quitted the ſervice of that prince ſome months ago, and am come to Spain with an Italian of great fineſſe: we have been three weeks at Valladolid, and lodge with a Caſtilian and Galician, who are, without contradiction, two young fellows of honour. We live together by the work of our hands, make good cheer, and amuſe ourſelves like princes: if you will join us, you ſhall be agreeably received by my confederates: for you always ſeemed to me to be a gallant man, of a diſpoſition not addicted to ſcruples, and a profeſſed brother of our order."

The

Digitized by Google

The rogue's frankneſs excited mine. "Since you ſpeak to me with ſo little reſerve (ſaid I to him) it is but reaſonable that I ſhould explain myſelf in the ſame manner to you. Indeed, I am not a novice in your profeſſion; and if my modeſty would allow me to recount my exploits, you would ſee that you have not judged too advantageouſly of my talents: but I will forbear to launch out in my own praiſe, and content myſelf with aſſuring you, while I accept that place in your company which is offered, that I will neglect nothing to approve myſelf worthy of your choice." As ſoon as I ſignified to this ambidexter my conſent to augment the number of his comrades, he conducted me to the place where they were, and introduced me to their acquaintance. It was here that I ſaw, for the firſt time, the illuſtrious Ambroſe de Lamela. Thoſe gentlemen examined me touching my ſkill in the myſtery of appropriating to one's ſelf with addreſs the effects of another. They wanted to know if I underſtood the principles of their art; but I ſhowed them a great many ſtratagems which they did not know, and which acquired their admiration of my ability. They were ſtill more aſtoniſhed, when deſpiſing the dexterity of my hand, as a thing too common, I told them that I excelled in tricks which required the aſſiſtance of genius. To convince them of this, I recounted the adventure of Jerome de Moyadas; and, upon the ſimple narration of that affair, they found me

Digitized by Google

me ſuch a ſuperior genius, that I was choſen their chief by unanimous conſent. I ſoon juſtified their choice by an infinite number of knaviſh deſigns, which we put in practice, and of which I was, as it were, the informing ſoul. When we had occaſion for an actreſs to carry on our projects, we made uſe of Camilla, who performed all her parts to admiration.

About that time, our brother Ambroſe, being tempted to reviſit his native country, ſet out for Gallicia, aſſuring us, that we might depend upon his return. He ſatisfied his deſire, and on his way back again, going to Burgos, with an intention of ſtriking ſome ſtroke, an inn-keeper of his acquaintance introduced him to the ſervice of Signor Gil Blas of Santillane, with whoſe affairs he did not fail to make him acquainted. Signor Gil Blas (he added, addreſſing himſelf to me) you know how we rid you of your portmanteau, in our furniſhed lodging at Valladolid; and I don't doubt that you ſuſpected Ambroſe of being the chief inſtrument of that theft. And you was in the right: for, at your arrival, he came and laid your ſituation before us, and we, the gentlemen undertakers, regulated ourſelves accordingly. But you are ignorant of the conſequence of that adventure, which I will, therefore, let you know, Ambroſe and I carried off your portmanteau, and, mounting your mules, took the road to Madrid, without incumbering ourſelves with

Digitized by Google

Camilla, or the reſt of our comrades, who, without doubt, were as much ſurpriſed as you at our non-appearance next day.

On the ſecond day we changed our deſign, and, inſtead of going to Madrid, which I had not quitted without cauſe, we paſſed by Zeberos, and continued our route as far as Toledo. In this city, our firſt care was to dreſs ourſelves like gentlemen; then giving ourſelves out for two brothers of Gallicia, who travelled out of curioſity, we ſoon became acquainted with perſons of character. As I had been ſo much accuſtomed to act the man of quality, I was eaſily miſtaken for ſuch, and people being uſually dazzled by expence, we impoſed upon every body by the gallant treats we began to give to the ladies. Among the women whom I viſited, there was one who touched my heart: I found her fairer than Camilla, and a good deal more young: I was deſirous of knowing who ſhe was, and learned that her name was Violante, and that her huſband was a gentleman, who cloyed already with her charms, purſued thoſe of a courtezan whom he loved. This piece of information was enough to determine me to eſtabliſh Violante the ſovereign lady of my affection.

It was not long before ſhe perceived her conqueſt: I began to follow her every where, and commit a thouſand impertinences, to perſuade her that I wanted nothing more than to conſole her for the infidelity of her ſpouſe. The fair one made her reflections

on

Digitized by Google

on the matter, which were ſuch, that at laſt, I had the pleaſure of knowing her approbation of my ſentiments. I received from her a billet, in anſwer to ſeveral which I had ſent to her, by one of thoſe old matrons who are ſo ſerviceable in Spain and Italy. The lady gave me to underſtand that her huſband ſupped every evening with his miſtreſs, and did not come home before it was very late. That ſame night I went under the windows of Violante, and entered into a moſt tender converſation with her: after which we agreed at parting to enjoy the ſame opportunity every night at the ſame hour, without prejudice to the other acts of gallantry which we ſhould be permitted to exerciſe in the day.

Hitherto Don Balthazar, the huſband of my princeſs, came off very cheaply: but I choſe to love naturally, and repaired one evening under the lady's windows, with a deſign to tell her, that I could live no longer, if I did not enjoy a tête-a-tête with her in a place more ſuitable to the exceſs of my love; an indulgence which I had not as yet been able to obtain. But juſt as I got to the place, I ſaw a man come into the ſtreet, who ſeemed to obſerve me: in effect, it was the huſband, who returned from the courtezan earlier than uſual, and who perceiving a cavalier near his houſe, inſtead of going in, walked to and fro in the ſtreet. I remained for ſome time unreſolved; but, at laſt, determined to accoſt Don

Digitized by Google

Balthazar, whom I did not know, and of whom I was also utterly unknown. "Signor cavalier (said I to him) pray leave the street free to me for one night: I will do as much for you another time."—"Signor (he replied) I was going to make the same request to you: I am in love with a girl whom her brother guards like a dragon, and who lives not above twenty paces from hence, so that I wish there was nobody in the street."—"There is one way (said I) of satyfying us both, without incommoding either; for added I (showing him his own house) the lady whom I serve lodges there; and let us assist one another if either of us should be attacked."—"With all my heart (he replied) I will go to my rendezvous, and we will back one another should there be occasion." So saying, he left me; but it was in order to observe me the better, and this the darkness of the night permitted him to do with impunity.

As for my part, I approached in security the balcony of Violante, who soon appeared, and we began to converse together. I did not fail to insist upon my queen's granting me a private interview in some particular place. She resisted my importunities a little, to enhance the value of the favour which I demanded; then dropping a letter, which she took out of her pocket, "Hold (said she) you will find in this billet, the promise of what you so earnestly desire." She afterwards withdrew, because the hour at which her husband usually returned

Digitized by Google

returned was at hand, upon which I secured the billet, and advanced to the place where Don Balthazar said he was concerned: but he, having very well perceived what I wanted with his wife, came to me, saying, "Well, Signor cavalier, are you satisfied with your good fortune?"—I have cause to be so (I replied:) and what have you done? has love favoured your addresses?"—"Ah no! (said he) the cursed brother of the beauty whom I love is returned from a country-house, where I imagined he would stay till to-morrow; and this mischance has baulked me of the pleasure with which I flattered myself."

Don Balthazar and I made mutual protestations of friendship; and, to tie the knots of it the faster, made an appointment to meet next day in the great square. After we parted, he went home, but mentioned not a word of what he knew to Violante. Next day he repaired to the great square, where I arriving a moment after him, we saluted one another with demonstrations of friendship, as perfidious on one side, as sincere on the other. Then Don Balthazar made me the confidante of a feigned intrigue with the lady whom he had mentioned the preceeding night; recounting a long story that he had invented, in order to engage me in my turn, to tell him in what manner I had become acquainted with Violante. I did not fail to fall into the snare, and confess all with the utmost frankness: I even showed the letter which I had received

Digitized by Google

ceived from her, and read the contents in theſe words:

"I Shall dine to-morrow with Donna "Inez: you know where ſhe lives: it is in the "houſe of that faithful friend that I intend "to give you a private interview; for I can "no longer refuſe that favour which you "ſeem to deſerve."

"This (ſaid Don Balthazar) is a billet which promiſes you the accompliſhment of your wiſh; I congratulate you beforehand on the happineſs that attends you." He could not help being a little diſconcerted while he ſaid this; but he eaſily concealed his trouble and confuſion from me. I was ſo much engroſſed by hope, that I never thought of obſerving my confidante, who was obliged, however, to leave me, that I might not at laſt perceive his agitation. He ran to appriſe his brother-in-law of this adventure; but I am ignorant of what paſſed between them: all I know of the matter is, that Don Balthazar came and knocked at the door while I was with Violante at the houſe of Donna Inez: and as ſoon as we learned that it was he, I eſcaped at a back-door before he came in. As ſoon as I was gone, the ladies, whom the unforeſeen arrival of the huſband had diſconcerted, recollected themſelves, and received him with ſuch effrontery, that he ſuſpected I was either concealed, or had made my eſcape.

I can-

Digitized by Google

I cannot tell what he ſaid to Donna Inez and his wife, becauſe it never came to my knowledge.

Mean while, without ſuſpecting that I was Don Balthazar's dupe, I went away, curſing him, and returned to the great ſquare, where I had appointed to meet Lamela. I did not find him however; he had little affairs of his own to manage, and the rogue was more fortunate than I. While I waited for him, I ſaw my perfidious confidante arrive, who came up to me with a gay air, and ſmiling, aſked news of my interview with my nymph at the houſe of Donna Inez. "I do not know, ſaid I, what demon, jealous of my pleaſures, delights in thwarting them: but while I was alone with my lady, preſſing her to make me happy, her huſband, whom the devil confound! came and knocked at the door: ſo that being obliged to get off as faſt as I could, I retired by a back-door, curſing to hell the troubleſome cuckold who broke all my meaſures."—"I am truely ſorry for it (cried Don Balthazar, who felt a ſecret joy in ſeeing my vexation) what an impertinent huſband muſt he be! I adviſe you to give him no quarter."—"O! as for that (I replied) I will take your advice: and I can aſſure you that his honour ſhall make its exit this night: his wife, when I left her, bad me not be diſcouraged at ſo ſmall a matter: but be ſure to come under her window earlier than uſual, for ſhe was reſolved to admit me into her houſe: and deſired me, at all events,

Digitized by Google

to come attended with two or three friends, for fear of ſurpriſe."—"What a prudent lady ſhe is! (ſaid he) I will, if you pleaſe, accompany you thither."—"Ah, my dear friend! (cried I, in a tranſport of joy, while I threw my arms around his neck) I am infinitely obliged to you."—"I will do more (he reſumed) I am acquainted with a young fellow who is another Cæſar; he ſhall be of the party, and then you may boldly confide in your eſcorte."

I did not know what acknowledgements to make to this new friend, ſo much was I charmed with his zeal. In ſhort, I accepted the ſuccour which he offered, and appointing to meet in the twilight under Violante's balcony, we parted for that time. He went to find his brother-in-law, who was the Cæſar in queſtion; and I took a turn till the evening, with Lamela, who (though he was ſurpriſed at the ardour with which Don Balthazar eſpouſed my intereſt) diſtruſted him no more than I: we fell nodding into the ſnare, which, I own, was unpardonable in people of our experience. When I thought it was time to preſent myſelf before Violante's window, Ambroſe and I appeared upon the ſpot, armed with good rapiers; and there we found the lady's huſband, with another man, waiting for us, without flinching. Don Balthazar accoſting me, and ſhowing his brother-in-law, ſaid, "Signor, this is the cavalier, whoſe bravery, I extolled ſo much. Get into the houſe

Digitized by Google

houſe of your miſtreſs, and let not anxiety hinder you from enjoying the moſt perfect felicity."

After ſome mutual compliments, I knocked at my nymph's door, which being opened by a kind of duenna, I entered, and without taking notice of what paſſed behind me, advanced into a hall where Violante was. While I ſaluted the lady, the two traitors, who had followed me into the houſe, and ſhut the door ſo haſtily after them, that Ambroſe was left in the ſtreet, diſcovered themſelves. You may eaſily imagine that we then came to blows. Both of them charged me at once; but I found them work enough, and employed them in ſuch a manner, that perhaps they repented they had not choſen a ſurer conveyance for their revenge. I ran the huſband through the body, and his brother-in law ſeeing him out of the queſtion, got to the door, which the duenna and Violante had opened to make their eſcape, while we were engaged. I purſued them into the ſtreet, where I rejoined Lamela, who not being able to extract one word from the women in their flight, did not preciſely know what to think of the noiſe he had heard. We returned to the tavern where we lodged, ſecured our moſt valuable effects, and mounting our mules, rode out of the city without waiting for day.

Knowing very well that this affair might have bad conſequences, and that a ſearch would be made at Toledo, which we were in the

Digitized by Google

right to anticipate, we went to bed at Villarubia, at an inn, where, ſome time after, a merchant of Toledo arrived, in his way to Segorba. As we ſupped in his company, he recounted the tragical adventure of Violante's huſband, and was ſo far from ſuſpecting us to be concerned, that we boldly aſked of him all manner of queſtions about the affair. "Gentlemen (ſaid he) juſt as I ſet out this morning, I heard of the melancholy accident. Search was made every where for Violante, and I was told that the corregidor, who is related to Don Balthazar, has reſolved to ſpare nothing in diſcovering the murderers. This is all I know of the matter."

Though I was not much alarmed at the ſearch of the corregidor, I reſolved to quit New Caſtile immediately: reflecting that when Violante ſhould be found, ſhe would confeſs all, and on her deſcription of my perſon to the judge, people would be ſent in purſuit of me. For this reaſon, the very next day, we avoided the highway, through precaution: Lamela being luckily acquainted with three-fourths of Spain, and particularly with the by-ways through which we could ſecurely repair into Arragon. Inſtead of going ſtraight to Cuenca, we kept among the mountains adjacent to that city; and, through paths that were not unknown to my guide, arrived at a grotto which looked very much like an hermitage; and, indeed it was the ſame to which you came laſt night for an aſylum.

While

Digitized by Google

While I was conſidering the country around, which preſented to my view a moſt charming rural proſpect; my companion ſaid to me, "I paſſed by this place ſix years ago, at which time that grotto ſerved as a retreat to an old hermit, who gave me a very charitable reception: entertaining me with a ſhare of his proviſions: I remember that he was a very holy man, and harangued me with a diſcourſe that had almoſt detached me from the world: perhaps he is ſtill alive: I will go and ſee." So ſaying the curious Ambroſe alighted from his mule, and entering the hermitage, where having ſtaid ſome minutes, he returned, calling to me, "Come hither, Don Raphael—come and ſee a very affecting ſcene."

I alighted immediately, and tying our mules to a tree, followed Lamela into the grotto, where I perceived an old anchorite, pale and dying, ſtretched at his full length upon a truckle-bed. A white beard very buſhy, covered his whole breaſt; and in his hands, claſped together, appeared a large twiſted roſary. At the noiſe we made at approaching him, he opened his eyes, which death had already begun to cloſe, and after having looked at us for a moment, ſaid, "Whoſoever you are, my brethren, profit by the ſpectacle that now preſents itſelf to your eyes: I have lived forty years in the world, and ſixty in this ſolitude. Ah! how long, at this moment, ſeems the time which I have beſtowed on my pleaſures! and, on the contrary, how ſhort does

Digitized by Google

that appear which I have consecrated to penitence and devotion! Alas! I am afraid that the austerities of brother John have not sufficiently expiated the sins of the licentiate Don Juan de Solis."

He had no sooner spoke these words than he expired, leaving us very much affected with his death. These sort of objects always make some impression even on the greatest libertines. But we did not retain it long: we soon forgot what he had said to us, and began to take an inventory of every thing in the hermitage: an employment not very laborious; all his furniture consisting in what you may have observed in the grotto. Brother John was not only ill provided with furniture, but also kept a very bad larder: for all the provision we found, was a few filberts, and some crusts of barley-bread, so hard as to be, in all appearance, proof against the gums of the holy man. I say, his gums; because we observed that he had lost all his teeth. All that this solitary habitation contained, and all that we beheld, made us regard the good anchorite as a perfect saint. We were shocked, indeed, at one thing: we opened a paper folded in form of a letter, which he had laid upon the table, and in which he begged that the person who should read it, would carry his rosary and sandals to the Bishop of Cuenca. We did not know with what intention this new father of the desert could desire to make such a present to his bishop. This seemed an

outrage

outrage againſt humility, and the behaviour of a man who wanted to ſet up for canonization. And perhaps there was nothing in it but pure ſimplicity; for I don't pretend to decide the matter.

While we diſcourſed together on this ſubject, a pleaſant thought came into Lamela's head. "Let us ſtay (ſaid he) in this hermitage, and diſguiſe ourſelves like anchorites, having firſt buried brother John. You ſhall paſs for him, and I, under the name of brother Anthony, will go begging in the neighbouring towns and villages. Beſides our being ſecure from the enquiries of the corregidor (for I don't believe he will think of ſearching for us here) I have ſome good acquaintance at Cuenca, which we may cultivate." I approved of this extravagant propoſal, not ſo much for Ambroſe's reaſons, as out of pure whim, or a deſire of acting a part in a play. About thirty or forty paces from the grotto, we dug a grave, in which we modeſtly interred the old anchorite, after having ſtripped him of his clothes; that is, a ſimple robe tied about his middle with a leather girdle: we likewiſe cut off his beard, to make a falſe one for me; and, in ſhort, after having performed his funeral, took poſſeſſion of the hermitage.

We fared poorly the firſt day, being obliged to live on the proviſions of the defunct; but next morning, before day, Lamela ſet out in order to ſell the two mules at Toralva, and returned in the evening laden with victuals, and

and other things which he had purchaſed. He brought every thing that was neceſſary for our transformation; he made for himſelf a ruſſet gown, and a little red beard of horſe-hair, which he fixed ſo artificially to his ears, that one would have ſworn it was the natural produce of his chin. There is not a more dextrous young fellow in the world than he; who likewiſe weaved the beard of brother John, which he applied to my face, and my brown woolen cap ſerved to cover the artifice; ſo that there was nothing wanting to our diſguiſe. We found each other ſo pleaſantly equipped, that we could not, without laughing, behold ourſelves in this dreſs, which truely was not very ſuitable to our real characters. Together with brother John's robe, I wore his roſary and ſandals, of which I made no ſcruple to deprive the biſhop of Cuenca.

We had been already three days in the hermitage, without ſeeing a ſoul appear; but on the fourth two peaſants entered the grotto, bringing bread, cheeſe, and onions, to the defunct, whom they ſtill thought alive. As ſoon as I perceived them, I threw myſelf on my bed, and it was no difficult matter to deceive them: for beſides that there was not light enough to enable them to diſtinguiſh my features, I imitated, as well as I could, the voice of brother John, whoſe laſt words I had heard; and they had no ſuſpicion of the cheat: they ſeemed only ſurpriſed to meet another hermit there: which when Lamela perceived,

Digitized by Google

perceived, he ſaid with an hypocritical air, "My brethren, be not ſurpriſed to ſee me in this ſolitude; I have quitted an hermitage I poſſeſſed in Arragon, to come hither and attend the venerable and diſcreet brother John, who in his extreme old age has occaſion for a comrade who can provide for his neceſſities." The peaſants gave infinite praiſe to the charity of Ambroſe, and expreſſed great joy, in being able to boaſt of having two holy perſonages in their country.

Lamela, with a large havreſack, which he had not forgot to purchaſe, went a begging for the firſt time in the city of Cuenca, which is but a ſmall league from the hermitage. With a devout appearance which he had received from nature, and the art of making advantage of it, which he poſſeſſed in a ſupreme degree, he did not fail to extort alms from charitable people, with whoſe liberalities he filled his havreſack. "Mr. Ambroſe (ſaid I to him at his return) I congratulate you upon your happy talent of melting the ſouls of chriſtians. Egad! one would think you had been a begging brother among the capuchins." "I have done ſomething elſe (anſwered he) than fill my knapſack: you muſt know I have diſcovered a certain nymph called Barba, whom I formerly loved, and whom I have found ſtrangely altered: ſhe (like us) has turned devotee, and lives with two or three ſiſters of the ſame claſs, who edify the world in publick, and in private live ſcandalous lives.

Digitized by Google

lives. As she did not know me at first, "How! madam Barba (said I) is it possible that you do not recollect one of your old friends, your admirer Ambrose?"—"By my faith! Signor de Lamela (cried she) I should never have expected to see you again in the habit you wear! By what adventure are you become hermit?"—"I cannot tell you at present (I replied) the detail is somewhat long; but I will come back to-morrow to gratify your curiosity, and bring along with me my companion, brother John."—"Brother John! (said she interrupting me) what the good anchorite who lives in the hermitage near this city? Sure you joke; they say he is more than an hundred years old."—"It is true (said I to her) that he was once of that age; but he has grown a great deal younger within these few days; and is at present no older than I."—"Well, let him come along with you (replied Barba) I see there is some mystery in the case."

We did not fail the next day as soon as it was dark, to go to the house of those bigots, who had prepared a sumptuous entertainment for our reception. We immediately took off our beards, and hermits dress, and, without ceremony told them who we were. On their side, for fear of being indebted to us, for our frankness, they showed what false devotees are capable of, when they banish grimace. We spent almost all the night at table, and did not retire to our grotto till the dawn. We returned

returned thither again in a very ſhort time; or rather did the ſame thing (almoſt every day) during three months: in which time we ſpent two thirds of our money with theſe nymphs: but one being ſuſpicious of our characters, diſcovered the whole, and has informed juſtice againſt us, which this day intended to viſit the hermitage, and ſecure our perſons. Yeſterday, Ambroſe, while he was begging at Cuenca, met one of our ſiſters, who gave him a note, ſaying, one of my friends wrote this letter to me, which I was going to ſend to you by an expreſs: ſhow it to brother John, and take your meaſures accordingly. It was this billet gentlemen, which Lamela delivered to me in your preſence, and which has made us quit ſo ſuddenly our ſolitary habitation.

CHAP. II.

The Council which Don Raphael held with his hearers, and the adventure which happened to them when they deſigned to quit the wood.

WHEN Don Raphael had ended his narration, which I thought a little tedious, Don Alphonſo was ſo polite as to ſay it had diverted him very much. Then Signor Ambroſe opened, and addreſſing himſelf to his fellow-adventurer, "Don Raphael (ſaid he) conſider that the ſun is ſet; it will be proper, methinks, to deliberate upon what we are to do."—"You are in the right (replied his

Digitized by Google

do a good as a bad action." Ambroſe, on his part, ſignified his willingneſs to lend a hand to ſuch a laudable enterpriſe, for which (ſaid he) I foreſee we ſhall be well recompenſed. I dare likewiſe affirm, that on this occaſion I was not at all afraid of the danger; and that no knight-errant ever ſhowed more readineſs to ſuccour damſels in diſtreſs. But not to conceal the truth, the danger was not great: for Lamela having reported that the arms of the robbers were all in a heap at the diſtance of ten or twelve paces from them, it was no difficult matter for us to execute our deſign. We tied our horſe to a tree, and approached as gently as poſſible the place where they were talking with great warmth; and making a noiſe that helped us to ſurpriſe them, we made ourſelves maſters of their arms, before we were diſcovered; then firing a volley upon them, ſtretched them all breathleſs on the ſpot.

During this execution, the light going out we remained in darkneſs; but for all that did not delay to untie the man and woman, who were ſo much engroſſed by their fear, that they had no power to thank us for what we had done in their behalf. It is true, indeed, they did not as yet know whether to look upon us as their deliverers, or as a new troop of banditti, who had not reſcued them from the others with any intention to uſe them better. But we encouraged them, by proteſting that we

Digitized by Google

we would conduct them to an inn, which Ambroſe affirmed was not more than half a league from thence; and that they might there take all neceſſary precautions for their ſecurity, in going whither their affairs called them. After this aſſurance, with which they ſeemed very well ſatisfied we re-placed them in their chaiſe, and brought them out of the wood, leading the mules by the bridles. Our anchorites afterwards examined the pockets of the vanquiſhed, took care of Don Alphonſo's horſe, ſecured thoſe that belonged to the thieves, which we found tied to trees near the field of battle; and carrying them all off, followed brother Anthony, who mounted one of the mules, in order to guide the chaiſe to the inn; at which, however, we did not arrive in leſs time than two hours, although he had aſſured us that it was not far from the wood.

Every body in the houſe being a-bed, we knocked loudly at the door; upon which the landlord and his wife got up in a hurry, and were not ſorry to ſee their reſt interrupted by the arrival of an equipage, which they thought would have ſpent more money than it did. The whole inn was lighted in a moment; Don Alphonſo and the illuſtrious ſon of Lucinda offered their hands to help the cavalier and lady out of the chaiſe, and even ſerved them as uſhers to the chamber whither the landlord conducted them. There a great many compli-

Digitized by Google

compliments paſſed; and we were not a little aſtoniſhed when we underſtood that it was the Count de Polan himſelf, and his daughter Seraphina, whom we had delivered. It is impoſſible to deſcribe the ſurpriſe of that lady, as well as of Don Alphonſo, when they recollected each other. The Count took no notice of it, ſo much was he otherwiſe engroſſed, in recounting to us in what manner the robbers had attacked him; and how they had ſeiſed his daughter and him, and after having killed his poſtilion, page, and valet de chambre: he ended with telling us, that he had a deep ſenſe of the obligation he lay under to us: and if we would come to him at Toledo, where he ſhould be in a month, we ſhould ſee whether or no he was ungrateful.

Nor did the daughter of this nobleman forget to thank us for her happy deliverance: and as Raphael and I imagined we ſhould pleaſe Don Alphonſo, by giving him an opportunity of talking a moment in private with that young widow, we gratified his deſire, by amuſing the Count de Polan. "Fair Seraphina (ſaid Don Alphonſo to the lady, in a low voice) I will no longer complain of the fate that compels me to live like a man baniſhed from civil ſociety, ſince I have been ſo happy as to contribute to the important ſervice which you have received."—"How! (anſwered ſhe ſighing) is it you who have

ſaved

Digitized by Google

ſaved my life and honour? Is it to you that my father and I are ſo much indebted? Ah! Don Alphonſo! why did you kill my brother?" She ſaid no more; but he eaſily perceived by theſe words, and the tone in which they were pronounced, that if he was violently in love with Seraphina, ſhe was no leſs enamoured of him.

The End of the FIFTH BOOK.

Digitized by Google

THE ADVENTURES OF GIL BLAS OF SANTILLANE.

BOOK VI.

CHAP. I.

The conduct of Gil Blas and his companions, after they quitted the Count de Polan. The important project which Ambroſe formed, and the manner in which it was executed.

THE Count de Polan, having ſpent one half of the night in thanking and aſſuring us that we might depend upon his gratitude, called the landlord, in order to conſult with him about the means of getting in ſafety to Turis, whither he deſigned to go. We left that nobleman to take his meaſures accordingly, and departing from the inn, followed the road that Lamela was pleaſed to chooſe.

After

Digitized by Google

After having travelled two hours, day surprised us near Campelio; upon which we immediately betook ourselves to the mountains which are between that village and Requena, and there passed the day in reposing ourselves, and counting our finances, which were a good deal increased by the money of the robbers; for above three hundred pistoles were found in their pockets. As soon as it was dark we set forward again, and next morning entered the kingdom of Valencia. We retired to the first wood that presented itself to our view, and pushing a good way into it, arrived at a place through which a rivulet of chrystalline water gently glided in its way to join the streams of the Guadalaviar.* The shade projected by the trees, and the grass which the place afforded in abundance to our horses, would have determined us to halt here, even if we had not been resolved upon it before. We alighted therefore, and prepared to pass the day very agreeably; but when we went to breakfast, found very little provision left. We began to want bread, and our bottle was become a body without a soul. "Gentlemen (said Ambrose) the most charming retreats are but disagreeable without Bacchus and Ceres; our provision must be renewed; I will for that purpose go to Xelva, an handsome town not

* Guadalaviar, a river of Spain, that taking its rise near the source of the Tagus, on the confines of Arragan and New Castile, traverses the first of these kingdoms, enters Valencia, waters the capital, and discharges itself into the gulf of that name.

Digitized by Google

above two leagues from hence; ſo that the journey will ſoon be finiſhed." So ſaying, he fixed the bottle and havreſack on one of the horſes, and mounting on top of them, went out of the wood, with a diſpatch that promiſed ſpeedy return.

He did not come back, however, ſo ſoon as we expected; more than half of the day elapſed, and night was ready to cover the trees with her ſooty wings, when we beheld our purveyor, whoſe ſtay had begun to give us ſome uneaſineſs. He exceeded our expectation by the quantity of things with which he returned laden; he brought not only the leathern bottle filled with excellent wine, and the knapſack crammed with bread and all ſorts of roaſted veniſon, but alſo a great bundle of cloth, which we obſerved with a good deal of attention. He perceived our admiration, and ſaid with a ſmile, "I defy Don Raphael, and all the world together, to gueſs why I have purchaſed theſe things." Saying theſe words, he looſed the bundle, to ſhow the particulars of what he had obſerved in the groſs. He diſplayed a cloak, and very long black robe; two doublets with their hoſe; one of thoſe inkhorns which are compoſed of two pieces tied together by a ſtring, the horn of which is ſeparated from the pen caſe; a quire of fine white paper, and a padlock with a large ſeal and green wax; and when he had exhibited his whole purchaſe, Don Raphael ſaid to him in

Digitized by Google

in a jocular way, "Egad, Mr. Ambroſe, it muſt be confeſſed you have made a fine bargain. What uſe, if you pleaſe, do you intend to make of it?"—"An admirable one (replied Lamela;) all theſe things have coſt me but ten doubloons: and I am perſuaded that they will bring us in more than five hundred; you may depend upon it, I am none of thoſe who incumber themſelves with uſeleſs effects; and to convince you that I did not buy all this like a fool, I will communicate the project I have formed."

"Having furniſhed myſelf with bread, (added he) I went into a cook's ſhop, where I ordered ſix partridges, as many pullets and young rabbits to be put to the fire; and while they were doing, a man came into the ſhop in a rage, and, complaining loudly of the behaviour of a merchant in town, ſaid to the cook, "By St. Jago! Samuel Simon is the moſt ridiculous merchant in Xelva; he has affronted me in open ſhop; the covetous wretch would not give me credit for ſix ells of cloth, though he knows very well that I am a reſponſible tradeſman, and that he can loſe nothing by me. Is he not a ſtrange animal? He ſells willingly on credit to people of quality, and had rather venture with them, than oblige an honeſt citizen without any riſk. Was there ever ſuch madneſs? Damned Jew! would he were taken in! My wiſh will be one day ac-

Digitized by Google

compliſhed. There are merchants enough of my opinion."

Hearing the tradeſman ſpeak in this manner, and ſay a great many other things of the ſame nature, I had a certain forewarning that I ſhould cheat this Samuel Simon. "Friend (ſaid I to the man who complained) what is the character of this perſon whom you mentioned?"—"A very bad one (anſwered he haſtily;) I aſſure you he is a rank uſurer, tho' he affects the manners of a benevolent man. He was a Jew, and turned Catholick; but in his heart, he is ſtill as much a Jew as ever Pilate was: for, they ſay, he abjured for intereſt."

I lent an attentive ear to all the diſcourſe of the tradeſman; and did not fail, when I came out of the cook's ſhop, to enquire for Samuel Simon's houſe. A perſon ſhowed it to me: I ſurveyed his ſhop, examined every thing; and my imagination, ready at a call, ſketched out a ſtratagem which I digeſted, and which appeared worthy of the valet of Signor Gil Blas. I went to a broker's, where I bought theſe clothes; one ſuit for acting an inquiſitor, another to repreſent a ſcrivener, and the third for playing the part of an alguazil.

"Ah, my dear Ambroſe! (cried Don Raphael interrupting him in a tranſport of joy) what a wonderful idea! what a glorious plan! I am jealous of the invention, and would willingly give up the greateſt ſtrokes of my life to

Digitized by Google

to be thought the author of ſuch a happy ſcheme! Yes, Lamela, (added he) I ſee all the richneſs of thy deſign, the execution of which ought to give thee no uneaſineſs. Thou haſt occaſion for two good actors to ſecond thee, and they are already found. Thou, who haſt the air of a devotee, will act the inquiſitor very well; I will repreſent the ſecretary; and Signor Gil Blas if he pleaſes, ſhall play the part of an alguazil; thus (continued he) are the cues diſtributed; to-morrow we will act the piece, and I will anſwer for its ſucceſs, unleſs ſome of thoſe unlucky accidents happen which confound the beſt concerted deſigns."

I conceived as yet but very confuſedly the project which Don Raphael liked ſo much, but the whole was explained to me at ſupper, and the trick ſeemed ingenious. After having diſpatched part of our veniſon and made our leathern bottle undergo a copious evacuation, we ſtretched ourſelves upon the graſs, and were aſleep in a very ſhort time. "Get up, get up (cried Signor Ambroſe, at day-break) people, who have great enterpriſes to execute, ought not to be lazy."—"Deuce take you Mr. Inquiſitor (ſaid Don Raphael, waking) how alert you are! that bodes no good to Mr. Simon."—"I grant it (replied Lamela) and will moreover tell you I dreamed this night that I plucked the hairs from his beard; is not that a villainous dream for

Digitized by Google

him, Mr. Secretary?" Theſe jokes were followed by a thouſand more, which put us all in good humour: we made a chearful breakfaſt, and then prepared for acting our ſeveral parts. Ambroſe put on the long gown and cloak, which gave him all the air of a commiſſary of the holy office: Don Raphael and I dreſſed ourſelves likewiſe ſo as to bear a pretty good reſemblance to a ſecretary and alguazil. We employed a good deal of time in diſguiſing ourſelves, and it was paſt two o'clock in the afternoon, when we quitted the wood, and ſet out for Xelva. It is true, indeed, we were in no hurry, as our comedy would not begin before the twilight: we therefore went at a very ſlow pace, and ſtopping at the city gate, waited there till night.

As ſoon as it was dark, we left our horſes in this place to the care of Don Alphonſo, who was very glad that he had no other part to perform. Don Raphael, Ambroſe, and I, went immediately into a publican's in the neighbourhood; and Mr. Inquiſitor going foremoſt, ſaid to the landlord with great gravity, "Maſter, I want to talk with you in private." The landlord carried us into a parlour, where Lamela finding him alone with us, ſaid, "I am commiſſary of the holy office, come hither upon a very important affair." At theſe words the publican grew pale, and replied with a faultering voice, that he hoped he had given no cauſe of complaint to the holy inquiſition."

"There-

Digitized by Google

" Therefore (replied Ambroſe) it has no intention to give you any trouble: God forbid that, too prompt to puniſh, it ſhould confound innocence with guilt; it is ſevere, but always juſt: in a word, a man muſt deſerve its chaſtiſements before he feels them. It was not you who brought me to Xelva, but a certain merchant called Samuel Simon, of whom we have received a very bad report: it is ſaid that he is ſtill a Jew, and embraced Chriſtianity through motives purely carnal. I order you, therefore, in the name of the holy office, to tell me what you know of that man. Beware of excuſing him, on account of his being your neighbour, and perhaps your friend; for I declare, if I perceive in your evidence the leaſt reſerve, you yourſelf are a loſt man. Come, ſecretary, (added he, turning to Raphael) do your duty."

Mr. Secretary, who already had his paper and inkhorn in his hand, ſat down at a table, and prepared with the moſt ſerious air in the world, to write the depoſition of the landlord, who on his part, proteſted that he would not betray the truth. " Well then, (ſaid the commiſſary inquiſitor to him) let us begin: anſwer only to my queſtions: I aſk no more."—" Do you ſee Samuel Simon frequent the church?"—" It is what I have not obſerved (ſaid the publican) I don't remember to have ſeen him at church."—" Good! (cried the inquiſitor) Write, that he is never

Digitized by Google

ſeen at church."—" I don't ſay ſo, Mr. Commiſſary, (replied the landlord) I only ſay, that I never ſaw him there: he may be in the ſame church with me, though I don't perceive him." " Friend (ſaid Lamela) you forget that you muſt not, in your examination, excuſe Samuel Simon: I have told you the conſequences of it. You muſt mention only thoſe things that are againſt him, and not one word in his favour."—" If that be the caſe, Signor Licentiate (reſumed the landlord) you can't reap much from my depoſition; I am not acquainted with the merchant in queſtion; therefore can ſay neither good nor ill of him; but if you want to know how he lives in his own family, I will go and call Gaſpard his prentice, whom you may interrogate: he comes here ſometimes, to make merry with his friends; and ſuch a tongue! he will diſcover the whole life and converſation of his maſter, and, I warrant it, find employment enough for your ſecretary."

" I like your frankneſs (ſaid Ambroſe) and you ſhow your zeal for the holy office, by informing me of a man acquainted with the morals of Simon. I will report you to the inquiſition. Make haſte, then (continued he) and bring hither that ſame Gaſpard, whom you mention. But do things diſcreetly, that his maſter may have no ſuſpicion of what paſſes. The publican acquitted himſelf of his commiſſion with great ſecrecy and diligence,

Digitized by Google

gence, and brought along with him the merchant's 'prentice, who was juſt ſuch a very talkative young fellow as we wanted. "Welcome, child (ſaid Lamela to him) you ſee in me an inquiſitor, nominated by the holy office to take informations againſt Samuel Simon, who is accuſed of Judaiſm. You live with him, and of conſequence are witneſs to the greateſt part of his behaviour. I believe it is unneceſſary to adverti ſe you of the obligation you are under, to declare all that you know of him, when I order you to do ſo, in the name of the holy inquiſition." "Signor Licentiate (replied the young man) I am very ready to ſatisfy you on that head, without being commanded in the name of the holy office. If my maſter was to take me for his text, I am perſuaded that he would not ſpare me; I will therefore deal as plainly with him, and tell you, in the firſt place, that he is a cloſe hunks, whoſe true ſentiments it is impoſſible to diſcover; one who affects all the exteriors of a holy man, but has not one ſcruple of virtue at bottom. He goes every evening to the houſe of a little Abigail."—"I am glad to hear that, ſaid Ambroſe (interrupting him) and I ſee, by what you ſay, that he is a man of bad morals: but anſwer preciſely to the queſtions I am going to aſk. I am particularly enjoined to know what are his ſentiments with reſpect to religion. Tell me, do you eat pork in your houſe?"—"I

Digitized by Google

don't think (replied Gaſpard) that we have eat of it twice, during the whole year that I have lived with him."—"Very well reſumed maſter inquiſitor: write, ſecretary, that pork is never eaten in the houſe of Samuel Simon. But, to make amends for that (continued he) you doubtleſs eat lamb ſometimes."—"Yes, ſometimes (replied the 'prentice) we had ſome for example, laſt Eaſter."—"A lucky epocha! (cried the commiſſary:) write, ſecretary, that Simon keeps the paſſover. This goes on excellently well, and, methinks, we have received good intelligence."

"Beſides, you muſt tell me, friend (added Lamela) if you have never ſeen your maſter careſs little children."—"A thouſand times, (replied Gaſpard) when he ſees little boys paſs by his ſhop, if they are at all handſome, he ſtops and fondles them."—"Write, maſter ſecretary (ſaid the inquiſitor, interrupting him) that Samuel Simon is violently ſuſpected of decoying Chriſtian children into his houſe, in order to cut their throats. A fine proſelyte indeed! Oho! Mr. Simon, you ſhall have to do with the holy office take my word for it: you muſt not imagine that you will be allowed to make your barbarous ſacrifices with impunity. Courage! zealous Gaſpard (ſaid he to the 'prentice) declare all that you know of the matter; and give us to underſtand, that this falſe catholick is more attached than ever to the Jewiſh cuſtoms and ceremonies.

Digitized by Google

ceremonies. Does not he ſpend one day of the week in total inaction?"—No! (anſwered Gaſpard) I have not obſerved that: I only perceive that on ſome days he ſhuts himſelf up in his cloſet, where he remains a long time."—"Ah! ha! (cried the commiſſary) he keeps the ſabbath as ſure as I am an inquiſitor. Mark, ſecretary, mark that he religiouſly obſerves the faſt of the ſabbath. Ah! the abominable wretch! I have only one thing more to aſk. Does not he ſpeak alſo of Jeruſalem?"—Very often (replied the young man) he relates to us the hiſtory of the Jews, and in what manner the temple of Jeruſalem was deſtroyed."—"Right! (ſaid Ambroſe) maſter ſecretary let not this piece of intelligence eſcape you: write in large characters, that Samuel Simon breathes nothing but the reſtoration of the temple; and that he meditates night and day the re-eſtabliſhment of his nation. I do not want to know any more; therefore it is needleſs to aſk any other queſtions: what the truſty Gaſpard has depoſed, is enough to bring a whole ſynagogue to the ſtake."

Maſter commiſſary of the holy office having interrogated the 'prentice in this manner told him he might retire: but ordered him, in the name of the holy inquiſition, to conceal from his maſter every tittle of what had paſſed. Gaſpard, having promiſed to obey, took his leave! and we did not tarry long

Digitized by Google

after he went out, but leaving the publick houſe as gravely as we had entered, went and knocked at the door of Samuel Simon, who opened it with his own hand; and if he was aſtoniſhed to ſee three ſuch figures as we were, he was much more ſo, when Lamela, being ſpokeſman, ſaid to him, with an imperious tone, "Mr. Samuel, I command you, in the name of the holy inquiſition, of which I have the honour to be commiſſary, to deliver into my hand, this inſtant, the key of your cloſet: I want to ſee if I cannot find ſomething to juſtify the informations which have been preſented to us againſt you."

The merchant confounded at theſe words, reeled two ſteps backward, as if he had received a blow on the ſtomach. Far from ſuſpecting us of any trick, he believed implicitly, that ſome ſecret enemy wanted to ſubject him to the ſuſpicion of the holy office; perhaps too, knowing himſelf to be no good catholick, he had cauſe to be afraid of an information. Be that as it will, I never ſaw a man more diſconcerted: he obeyed without reſiſtance, and opened his cloſet, with all the reſpect that a man could ſhow, who is in terror of the inquiſition. "At leaſt (ſaid Ambroſe while he went in) at leaſt you receive the orders of the holy office without contumacy. But (added he) retire into another room, and leave me at liberty to perform my function." Samuel was as obedient to this order as to the firſt:

Digitized by Google

firſt: he remained in his ſhop, while we three entered his cloſet, and began to ſearch for his caſh, which we eaſily found; for it was in an open coffer, and in much greater quantity than we could carry off, conſiſting of a great number of bags piled upon one another; but the whole in ſilver. We ſhould have liked gold better; but things being as they were, we were fain to accommodate ourſelves to neceſſity, and fill our pockets with ducats. We ſtuffed our breeches with them, and crammed them into every other part which we judged proper to conceal them. In ſhort, we were heavy laden, though our cargo did not appear; and this was owing to the addreſs of Ambroſe and Don Raphael, who, by their behaviour on this occaſion, let me ſee that there is nothing like a man being maſter of his trade.

After having done our buſineſs ſo ſucceſsfully, we came out of the cloſet, and, for a reaſon that the reader will eaſily gueſs, maſter Inquiſitor took out his padlock, and fixed it to the door with his own hand, then applying the ſeal, ſaid to Simon, "Maſter Samuel, I forbid you, in the name of the holy inquiſition, to touch this padlock, as well as the ſeal, which you are bound to reſpect, ſince it is the true ſeal of the holy office. I will return at the ſame hour to-morrow, in order to take it off, and bring further orders for you." So ſaying he made him open the ſtreet door, through

Digitized by Google

through which we joyfully paſſed, one after another. When we had gone about fifty yards, we began to walk with ſuch ſpeed and nimbleneſs, that we ſcarce touched the ground, notwithſtanding the burdens which we carried. We ſoon got out of town, and, remounting our horſes, puſhed towards Segorba, giving thanks to the god Mercury for ſuch an happy event.

CHAP. II.

The reſolution which Don Alphonſo and Gil Blas formed after this adventure.

WE travelled all night, according to our ordinary cuſtom, and found ourſelves at break of day near a little village two leagues from Segorba. As we were all fatigued, we willingly quitted the highway, to get among ſome willows, which we perceived at the bottom of a little hill, ten or twelve hundred paces from the village, in which we did not think proper to ſtop. We found that the willows yielded an agreeable ſhade, being watered by a ſmall rivulet; and the place ſuiting our taſte, we reſolved to ſpend the day in it. Alighting, therefore, we unbridled our horſes to let them feed, and lay down upon the graſs, where we took a little repoſe. We then emptied our knapſack and leathern bottle, and having made a plentiful breakfaſt, counted all the money which we had taken from

Digitized by Google

from Samuel Simon, and which amounted to three thouſand ducats; ſo that, with this ſum, and what we had before, we might have boaſted of having a pretty good ſtock.

As it was neceſſary for ſome of us to go and buy proviſion, Ambroſe and Don Raphael, having quitted their dreſs of inquiſitor and ſecretary, ſaid that they would take that charge upon themſelves: that the adventure at Xelva had only whetted their appetite; that they longed to be at Segorba, to ſee if ſome occaſion would not offer of ſtriking a new ſtroke—"You have nothing to do (added the ſon of Lucinda) but wait for us under theſe willows; we will not tarry, but rejoin you in a very ſhort time."—"Signor Don Raphael (cried I, laughing) bid us rather wait for you till doomſday; if you leave us now, I believe we need not expect to ſee you ſooner."—"We are affronted by your ſuſpicion (replied Signor Ambroſe) but we deſerve it at your hands; your diſtruſt is excuſable, after what we did at Valladolid; and we cannot blame you for thinking that we will make no more ſcruple of forſaking you than of abandoning our comrades in that city: but, however, you are miſtaken: the confederates, from whoſe company we withdrew, were perſons of very bad character, and their ſociety began to grow inſupportable. We muſt do juſtice to people of our profeſſion, by affirming that there are no aſſociates in civil

Digitized by Google

civil life leſs divided by intereſt than they: but when there is not a conformity of inclinations among them, their good underſtanding may be broke, as well as that of the reſt of mankind. Wherefore, Signor Gil Blas, (added Lamela) we beg that you and Don Alphonſo will have a little more confidence in us; and let not the deſire of Don Raphael and me to go to Segorba, give you the leaſt uneaſineſs."

"It is an eaſy matter (ſaid the ſon of Lucinda) to rid them of all cauſe of anxiety: let them remain maſters of the caſh, and then they will have in their own hands, good ſecurity for our return. You ſee, Signor Gil Blas (added he) that we come to the point at once. You ſhall have pledges in your hands, and I can aſſure you, that Ambroſe and I will ſet out without the leaſt apprehenſion of your giving us the ſlip. After ſuch a certain mark of our fidelity, won't you truſt entirely to our promiſe?"—"Yes, gentlemen (ſaid I) and you may now do what you pleaſe." They departed immediately with the leathern bottle and knapſack, leaving me under the willows with Don Alphonſo, who, after they were gone, ſaid to me, "Signor Gil Blas, I muſt diſcloſe my ſentiments to you. I upbraid myſelf with having had the complaiſance to come ſo far with two ſharpers: you cannot imagine how often I have repented of this my conduct. Yeſterday, while I took care of the horſes,

Digitized by Google

horſes, I made a thouſand mortifying reflections: I conſidered, that it ill became a young man, who has principles of honour, to live with ſuch wicked wretches as Don Raphael and Lamela: that if unluckily, one day, which may not be far off, a trick ſhould miſcarry, by which we ſhall fall into the hands of juſtice, I ſhall be ſhamefully puniſhed with them as a thief, and undergo the moſt infamous chaſtiſement. Theſe images inceſſantly occur to my fancy; and I own I have reſolved, that I may no longer be an accomplice of their miſdemeanors, to ſeparate from them for ever. I don't believe (continued he) that you will diſapprove of my deſign."—"No, I'll aſſure you (anſwered I) though you have ſeen me act the part of an alguazil, in the comedy of Samuel Simon, don't imagine that theſe ſorts of pieces are to my taſte. I take heaven to witneſs, that while I played ſuch a fine part, I ſaid within myſelf, In faith, Mr. Gil Blas, if juſtice ſhould now come and ſeize you by the collar, you would richly deſerve the ſalary which ſhe would beſtow. I feel myſelf, therefore, no more diſpoſed than you, Signor Don Alphonſo, to remain longer in ſuch good company: and if you will give me leave, I will accompany you. When the gentlemen return, we will demand our ſhare of the finances, and to-morrow morning or this very night, bid them an eternal adieu."

The

Digitized by Google

The beautiful Seraphina's lover approved of my propoſal: "Let us (ſaid he) get into Valencia, and embark for Italy, where we may engage in the Venetian ſervice. Is it not better to carry arms, than lead this baſe guilty life? we ſhall even be in a condition to make a pretty good figure with the money which we have: not that I can uſe ſuch ill-gotten wealth without remorſe; but, beſides that I am compelled by neceſſity, if ever I make the leaſt fortune in war, I ſwear that I will indemnify Samuel Simon." I aſſured Don Alphonſo, that I entertained the ſame ſentiments, and, in ſhort, we reſolved to leave our comrades next morning before day. We had not the leaſt temptation to profit by their abſence, that is, to decamp immediately with the caſh: the confidence they had ſhown, in leaving us maſters of the money, did not permit us to harbour ſuch a thought.

Ambroſe and Don Raphael returned from Segorba in the evening; and the firſt thing they told us was, that their journey had been proſperous; that they had laid the foundation of a ſtratagem, which in all likelihood, would be more advantageous than the laſt. Accordingly, the ſon of Lucinda was going to inform us of the particulars, when Don Alphonſo declared his reſolution to leave them; and let them know that I had the ſame intention. They uſed all their endeavours, in vain, to engage us to accompany them in their

Digitized by Google

their expeditions; for we took leave of them next day, after having made an equal partition of the money, and proceeded on our way to Valencia.

CHAP. III.

After what disagreeable incident Don Alphonso found his wishes fulfilled; and by what adventure Gil Blas of a sudden, saw himself in a happy situation.

WE pushed forward chearfully as far as Brunol, where unfortunately being obliged to halt, Don Alphonso fell sick of a high fever, with violent paroxysms, which made me afraid of his life. Luckily there was no physician in the place, and I was quit for my fear: he was out of danger at the end of three days, and my care helped to re-establish his health. He showed himself very sensible of what I had done for him; and as we felt a reciprocal kindness for one another, we swore an eternal friendship.

We betook ourselves again to the road, still resolved, when we should arrive at Valencia, to take the first opportunity of a passage into Italy. But heaven disposed of us otherwise. Seeing a number of peasants of both sexes, dancing in a circle, and making merry before the gate of a fine castle, we approached to behold their mirth; and Don Alphonso expected nothing less than the surprise with which

Digitized by Google

which he was ſeized all of a ſudden. He perceived the Baron de Steinbach, who no ſooner knew him again, than he ran to him with open arms, ſaying in a tranſport of joy, "Ah, Don Alphonſo! is it you! what an agreeable rencounter is this! while enquiry is made after you all over the kindom, chance preſents you to my view."

My companion, alighting immediately, ran and embraced the Baron, whoſe joy ſeemed immoderate. "Come, my ſon (ſaid the good old man to him) you will now know who you are, and enjoy the moſt perfect happineſs." So ſaying, he carried him into the caſtle, which I likewiſe entered along with them: for while they embraced one another, I had alighted and tied our horſes to a tree. The maſter of the caſtle was the firſt perſon whom we met. He was a man of about fifty years of age, and a very engaging aſpect: Signor (ſaid the Baron de Steinbach, preſenting Don Alphonſo to him) behold your ſon.—"At theſe words, Don Cæſar de Leyva (ſo was the maſter of the caſtle called) threw his arms about Don Alphonſo's neck, and weeping with joy, "My dear ſon (ſaid he) you ſee in me the author of your being: If I have let you remain ſo long in ignorance of your birth, believe me, I did in that a cruel violence to myſelf: I have a thouſand times ſighed with ſorrow; but I could do no otherwiſe. I married your mother through inclination, though ſhe was

Digitized by Google

was of a birth inferior to mine; and lived under the authority of a harſh father, who reduced me to the neceſſity of keeping ſecret a marriage contracted without his conſent. The Baron de Steinbach alone was in my confidence, and it was in concert with me that he brought you up. In ſhort, my father is no more, and I am now at liberty to declare you my ſole heir. This is not all (added he) you ſhall be married to a young lady, whoſe nobility equals mine."—"Signor (cried Don Alphonſo, interrupting him) don't make me pay too dear for the happineſs which you beſtow. Cannot I know that I have the honour of being your ſon, without learning, at the ſame time, that you want to make me unhappy? Ah, ſir! be not more cruel than your own father, who though he did not approve of your paſſion, was not ſo ſevere as to force you to marry."—Son (replied Don Cæſar) I don't intend to tyrannize over your affections: but be ſo complaiſant as to ſee the lady whom I deſtine for your bed; that is all I exact of your obedience. Though ſhe is a charming creature, and a very advantageous match for you, I promiſe not to conſtrain you to make her your wife. She is now in the caſtle; follow me, and you will own that there never was a more amiable object." So ſaying, he conducted Don Alphonſo into an apartment, whither I attended them, with the Baron de Steinbach.

There

Digitized by Google

There was the Count de Polan, with his two daughters, Seraphina and Julia, and Don Ferdinand, his ſon-in-law, who was nephew to Don Cæſar; there were other ladies and gentlemen preſent alſo. Don Ferdinand (as was already obſerved) had carried off Julia; and it was on occaſion of the marriage of theſe two lovers, that the peaſants of the neighbourhood were aſſembled to make merry. As ſoon as Don Alphonſo appeared, and his father had preſented him to the company, the Count de Polan got up, and running to embrace him, ſaid, "Welcome, my deliverer! Don Alphonſo (added he) obſerve the power that virtue has on generous minds: if you killed my ſon, you have alſo ſaved my life. I ſacrifice my reſentment to you, and give you that Seraphina, whoſe honour you have preſerved. In this manner I acquit myſelf of my obligation." The ſon of Don Cæſar did not fail to teſtify to the Count de Polan, how much he was affected with his generoſity; and I don't know whether he felt more joy in diſcovering his birth, or in learning that he was to be Seraphina's huſband. In effect, that marriage was celebrated in a few days after, to the infinite ſatisfaction of the parties concerned.

As I was alſo one of the Count's deliverers, that nobleman, who knew me again, aſſured me, he would take upon himſelf the care of making my fortune; but I thanked him for his

Digitized by Google

his generosity, and would not leave Don Alphonso, who made me steward of his house, and honoured me with his confidence. Scarce was he married, when the trick which had been played upon Samuel Simon lying on his conscience, he sent me to the merchant with all the money which had been stolen from him. I went accordingly to make restitution, and began the business of a steward, by doing that which ought to be the end of it.

The End of the SECOND VOLUME.

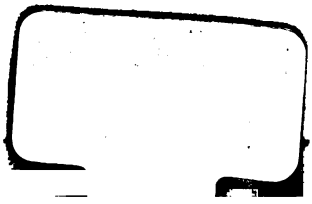


Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google